

**“I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year”**

- Charles Dickens

December 2021  
Volume 2

## End of Term Message...

In the style of Mr O’Sullivan , we would like to begin with some numbers...

14 (weeks completed in year 10)

25 (weeks until the end of year 10)

1/6 (of the time completed in your GCSE courses)

18 (days off over the Christmas break)

This term has been, arguably, one of the most difficult terms in your school journey so far. As a year group we are immensely proud of how you have matured and embraced school life, and with it, the ever changing landscape of life. Many of you have demonstrated adaptability and maturity whilst remaining hard-working and showing kindness, and that will stand you in good stead as you journey through the rest of your School life and beyond.

December sees another fabulous edition of our newsletter which we hope you enjoy reading. A huge well done from us for all of your achievements and to the students involved in putting this together. The Christmas Appeal collections illustrate what an amazing group of individuals you all are and the high level of involvement in the extra-curricular life of the School is fantastic, well done to everyone involved in the Christmas Concert and Vex Robotics to name just a couple.

For many, the Christmas holiday period is an opportunity to reflect on the year past, spend quality time with the people who mean the most to you, a time to relax, read and recharge.

Please take time out for yourselves over the Christmas break and we wish you, your families and all of your friends a very Merry Christmas,

- Mr Digby & Mrs Anderson

### **Maths:**

Tuesday – After School MA7

Wednesday—After School MA7 and MA5

Thursday—After School MA7

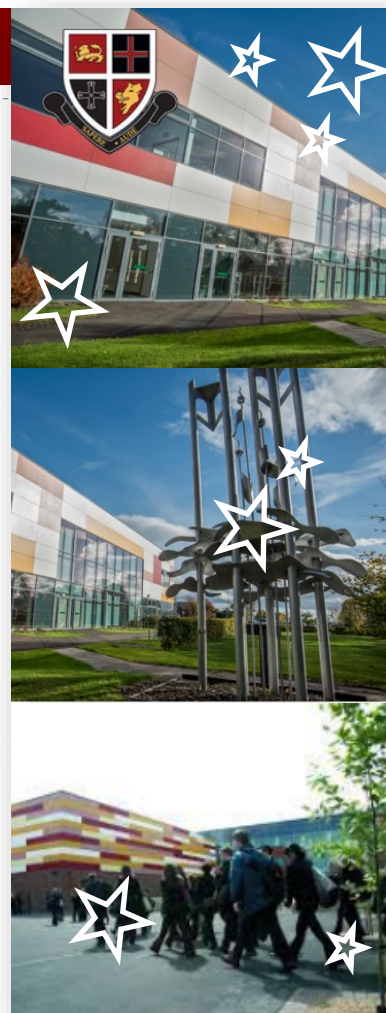
### **English:**

Tuesday – After School EN5



### **D+T:**

Thursday – After School TEP & GR1



### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

Welcome Message .....	1
GCSE Support .....	.1
Mental Health .....	.1
Achievement .....	.2
House Points .....	.3
Desert Island Discs .....	.3
Upcoming Dates.....	.3
Christmas Appeal.....	.4
Concert Review.....	.4
Culture .....	.4
Meet the sixth form team.....	.5
Mental Health and Wellbeing.....	.5

## ACHIEVEMENT

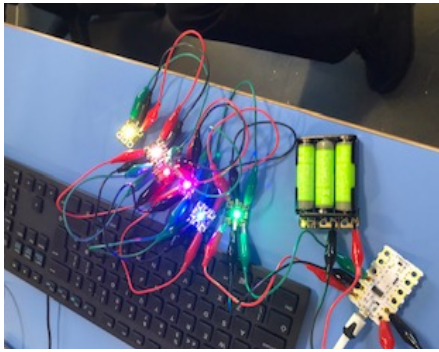
Well done to the 79 students who had 100% attendance last half term (minus any isolation period due to covid). Names were put into a random generator and Thomas Steel was awarded an Amazon voucher in our November achievement assembly.

Mr Corkin's construction class is proving to be one of the best: "Every single one of these lads are working their socks off in Construction...Every one of them is getting a house point today as they are possibly the best construction class I've had in the last 10 years. 100% trust worthy in the workshop and act very maturely. Also, never shy to answer question" - well done to all!" - Mr Corkin.

A huge congratulations to our year 10 girls football team who have made it to the last 32 in the country for their age group—a massive achievement! Well done to Grace, Carys, Evie, Ava, Lucy, Poppy and Bea.



Well done to all year 10 bakers who contributed to the pride bake sale raising £523 for a local LGBTQ teenage charity. In addition, Annabel and Carys have been working on an interactive display using programmable electronics for the upcoming pride week in February.



Well done to Beatrice O'Brien, Neroli Coleman and Weronika Wrona who won house points in October's pumpkin carving competition.

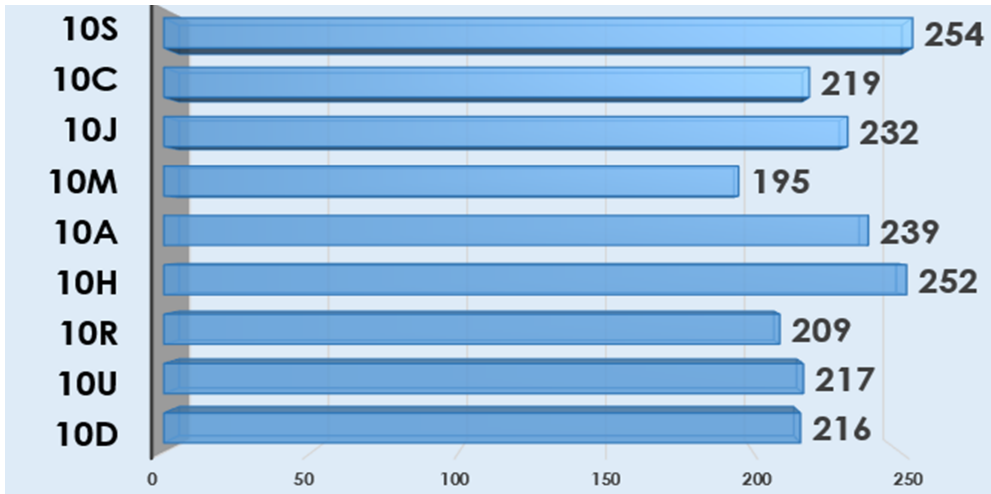
The following students competed in the senior maths challenge in November—well done to all! Joud Eqab, Yokub Hampshire-Wright, Sharvin Karthigeyen, Simon Mckim, Vihra Staykova, Imogen Thomas, Megan Thompson, Erin Tomaney and Annabel wade.

### Vex Robotics:

The Year 10 Robotics team are working on an exciting project which will see them compete in a regional competition in VEX Robotics early next year . An expert from CAD2CODE ( Michael Nelson) will be visiting to work with the team (kindly funded by a generous grant the Recce Foundation which is also allowing them to purchase a competition robot ) to prepare them for battle! The team are working extremely hard with Mr Corkin to prepare for this twice a week , well done to Alex Snell, Anabel Wade and Daniel Scrivens and we wish them the very best of luck! They are also helping teach the next crop of talented Robotics students from year 8 who also hope to compete next academic year thanks to the hard work of this hardworking trio.



## HOUSE POINTS UPDATE



House points were calculated on 03.12.21 with 10SW the winning form class very closely followed by 10HH. Well done to Miss McCarthy's form class who were treated to a continental breakfast in the café on Wednesday 15th December.



## Desert Island Discs — Mr Atkinson

Anyone who has stepped foot in Mr. Atkinson's classroom has no doubt heard or overheard him discussing his passion for music and the punk bands he listens to. His first song is The Damned 'Neat, Neat, Neat' - age 15 this song was unlike anything he had ever seen, heard or bought before. Written in 1977 by Brian James, the lyrics are very political and left wing, a key part of the punk rock genre. The lyrics imply that it is about living by your own rules; "no crime if there ain't no law // no cops left to mess you around." The chorus and the name of the song reference a very apathetic view of the world and making it "neat, neat, neat." This very much co-related to the political and social climate of the time; at the beginning of the year there were multiple IRA attacks, in April the clash released their debut album and the Yorkshire ripper killings are taking place. A time of much turmoil.

This album was vastly different to pop music at the time, Led Zeppelin, Abba and Queen were the biggest thing at the time and everything Mr. Atkinson hated about music. Even the name 'The Damned' is labeled outrageous. The uprising of punk in the late 70s posed the beginning of a change in music – songs at the time were long and featured lots of solos and instrumentals sections.

The next song we discussed is by The Clash from their second album 'Safe European Home'. Mr. Atkinson describes it as quite the opposite at their concerts. Mr. Atkinson saw it at Newcastle Union where there was promptly a riot and people broke in. Despite all this he spoke of how influential it was on him and his band at the time.

Finally, he chose a song by The Jam titled 'In The City' - another song that completely changed the music scene and really inspired him to "do it for himself, not waiting for others." It also showed him more about having a band and identity. The drummer wasn't even good, he could just look the part. The whole song itself is very upbeat with its use of electric guitars and drums. 'In the City' is about being young and the attraction of moving to the big city. "In the city there's a thousand faces all shining bright / And those golden faces are under 25 / They wanna' say, they gonna' tell ya / About the young idea" - a revolutionary time.

By Wilbur Ares Royle 10JW

### Upcoming...

#### Careers and Enrichment:

**7th Jan:** George Fouche International speaker workshop

**11th Jan:** Mock Interviews

**16th Feb:** Live Theatre performance 'Human Nature'

#### Dates for your Diary:

**7th March:** Year 10 Parents Evening



## CHRISTMAS APPEAL 2021

On Monday 6th December all year 10 forms placed a luxury Christmas hamper beneath our School Christmas tree as part of the Christmas Appeal 2021 organised by the house team. An exemplary effort by all - below, a message to you:

*"Whenever we start a campaign I always consider the impact it will have and how we can help others. I always wonder how successful it will be and whether we really will make a difference.*

*When I looked under the DJCS tree this year I knew instantly that it would make a difference. I was genuinely overwhelmed by your generosity – the hampers were full to the brim with an array of items which will make Christmas special for so many! You really have done a wonderful thing – take a moment on Christmas morning to recognise that. YOU make a difference!"* - Miss Forbes & The House Team

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT REVIEW

By Daniel Brown 10JW

Walking into the concert hall felt strange - it's a long time since I last went into there for anything other than an assembly - but familiar. It felt like comfort. And so did the music. It all felt nice to be back in here after two years of not being able to. I attended one of four concerts held on Thursday 9th and Friday 10th December—a huge feat to mark the coming of the festive season, and have detailed some highlights below.

To begin, Mr. Holmes gave a speech highlighting the work that has been put into the concert and the music began moments later with the wind band - front and centre of the show. 'A Christmas Fanfare' - and it immediately felt like Christmas.

A duet from the trombone and the piano named 'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes', was a beautifully moving piece that felt very 50s... and then 70s, and occasionally 2000s. No matter the time period, it felt very festive, very light hearted and mellow.

The longest piece of the show was a virtuosic trumpet solo. For someone who doesn't play the trumpet - or any wind instrument at all for that matter - I continuously thought that the player would surely pass out with such an impressive piece. The piece was also accompanied by a piano, which had a longer solo this time around for reasons relating to the fact that trumpet player did indeed have to breathe at some point. Some of the sections in the 'Nutcracker Suite' were familiar, so were less so, all were delightful.

Then came the Junior Orchestra, first with *Trepak* (You'll probably know the song more than the name) and then with the *Christmas Extravaganza* which felt like the finale it was so extravagant. Soon after came a Violin solo, which was extremely impressive. It was very dramatic, and felt like the storm before the calm. It was the kind of thing that could lift you from the ground, and the passion in the playing was evident.

Finally came a Traditional Canadian piece from the Wind Band - we end where we start - but not before a brief interjection from Mr O'Sullivan, before the grand finale. All in all, an impressive show that went high above the expectations of a school Christmas Concert.. Well done to all involved!

## CULTURE REVIEW—BALTIC MUSEUM

By Natalie Harvey 10RH

The Baltic museum is a very calming place with multiple different floors with different styles of entertainment for everyone to enjoy.

The exhibition "Ad Minoliti" is open until the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022. There is a magnificent amount of feminist and queer art using geometry and colour to allow you to create your own universe in your head as you wander around it. There is also a selection of books and comics that have been written by young people and young adults.

The next exhibition is open until the 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 and is called "Lumen". It's not only a treat for the eyes, but it is more a feast for your mind in the form of hearing. There are 9 different screens all showing a video on a loop, but if you want to experience the sound the best, you could face away from the screen and focus on the beautiful sounds of nature. They also have a few paintings on this floor of all different types of birds and how different artists interpret their own state of mind.

The next floor down is filled with different activities for younger children to stay occupied with. There is a sensory room with different light displays that can stimulate the senses and help with improving well-being.

The Baltic also has a gift shop with different styles of art and books to choose from.

I would recommend that people interested in different interpretations of art go to visit the Baltic before these displays are changed. Visiting this wonderful art museum has opened my eyes to different styles of art and it has also helped me to grow more confident within myself.

## MEET THE SIXTH FORM TEAM

On the 25th November our sixth form support team delivered a session to approximately 130 year 10 students on life at Durham Johnston sixth form. Budding journalist Daniel Brown interviewed the team to find out more:

*"Are you thinking of applying to Durham Johnston 6th Form? Does it look a little daunting? Dom, Becca, Mollie and Grace (all from Year 13) have been answering the most important questions about life at Sixth Form, applications for Sixth Form and even applications for university to help you feel more comfortable when a life at Sixth Form comes around.*

### **Q: How important are extra-curricular activities when making an application for Sixth Form?**

Dom: "You should really try to participate in as many extra-curricular activities as you can, that might be hobbies, things out of school or things in school like sports. Things like House Rep or Form Rep help too. You should try to take them seriously because it really helps you stand out in an application to Sixth Form or even a University."

Grace: "You should also attend things like after school revision clubs because it can really help you do well in your tests but it's also really nice to just have a place where you can just sit and study. I know it really helped me when I was doing GCSEs and I sort of wish I'd done more!"

Dom: "It also shows initiative if you didn't do very well on a test or something like that, that you want to do better and try and work harder to exceed. It also stands out on an application because it shows in your grades."

Mollie: "It also makes you more likely to do the subject in your A Levels, and if teachers who teach that subject see you studying harder for it then they might consider you more in an application."

### **Q: What kind of subjects would you recommend people take?**

Becca: "You should definitely take the kind of subjects that interest you, but also try to think about the kind of subjects that can help you in later life, so for example if you are thinking about working in sciences then you should [obviously] take a science-related subject such as chemistry."

*Becca takes biology, chemistry and business. She said earlier that chemistry is her favourite subject.*

Becca: "Also you should really try to take subjects that you enjoy above anything, don't take subjects that you really don't like because that can really affect your experience."

### **Q: What about life after Sixth Form, should we be thinking about that?**

Mollie: "You should try to think about what you would like to do afterwards, for example do you want to go to university and get a degree or would you like to get an apprenticeship, or would you rather get a full-time job instead of university? Any of those are valid options but you should start to consider this because it can come in useful if you have thought about it before hand."

Grace: "Every Thursday in form time we'll be here [La. 8] if you ever want any support on exams or anything related to Sixth Form. We are happy to talk to you and answer more questions."

*Hopefully this answered some of your burning questions about Sixth Form and beyond, and if you didn't have any questions about it, then you have answers to helpful questions that you didn't even know that you wanted!*

*As helpfully mentioned by Grace, the 4 Upper-Sixth Formers will be in Languages 8 during form period on a Thursday to support year 10 students. Don't be afraid to speak to them!*

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The festive period can be a difficult time for many. Remember to reach out to family and friends, access support, talk when you can—you are not alone. Below you will find details of support available from Kooth\_Kooth provides free online emotional wellbeing and mental health support for people aged 10-25.

**You can still access support over the holiday period**

We're online every day including **Christmas Day**  
Sign up for free at [Kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com)

**What's on Kooth in December**

December 3	December 10	December 10	December 15
<b>Kooth Discussion Board:</b> Not All Disabilities Are Visible	<b>Kooth Podcast:</b> History of the Holidays	<b>Kooth Discussion Board:</b> Helping Hands - Kindness & Volunteering	<b>Kooth Live Forum:</b> Looking After Your Wellbeing 7.30pm to 9pm
December 20	December 24	December 29	December 31
<b>Kooth Live Forum:</b> Let's Talk About: LGBTQIA+ & Religion 7.30pm to 9pm	<b>Kooth Discussion Board:</b> Give Yourself a Gift	<b>Kooth Live Forum:</b> Let's Party 7.30pm to 9pm	<b>Kooth Discussion Board:</b> New Year, Not New You

Find all of this & much more on [Kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com)

**HOW KIND YOU ARE.**

**THE BOUNDARIES YOU SET.**

**WHO YOU FOLLOW ONLINE**

**THINGS YOU CAN CONTROL**

**YOUR SELF-TALK.**

**HOW OFTEN YOU PRACTICE GRATITUDE.**

@STACIESWIFT

If you would like to be involved in the next edition of the year 10 student newsletter, or share your news and achievements, please see Mrs Anderson, email: [r.anderson3@durhamjohnston.org.uk](mailto:r.anderson3@durhamjohnston.org.uk)