ASTLEY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

NEWS
AUTUMN 2024
20TH DECEMBER 2024

MESSAGE FROM MR GOODMAN, HEAD OF SCHOOL



I continue to be impressed by how the vast majority of our students display the school's expectations of being ready, respectful and safe. I see this daily with how students act in lessons and around school. Many visitors to school comment on the positive student behaviour they see and the calm atmosphere around school. I also hear great examples of how students have acted in a respectful and safe manner in the local and wider communities.

As you will see from the pages of this newsletter, the Autumn term has been exceedingly busy and full of exciting events. Year 9 students experienced a cross-curricular project focusing on the Hartley Pit Disaster. Year 10 enjoyed the English Faculty's trip to Beamish, helping to enhance their understanding of Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Through the Holocaust Education Trust three Year 12 students were fortunate to take part in a visit to Auschwitz in Poland. This visit included a guided tour around the concentration camp and a talk from a rabbi on the lasting impact of the Holocaust.

Students continue to engage in many extra-curricular activities. They benefit from taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh programme and are engaging with the range of activities associated with this. Some of our talented performance students are working with Whytrig Middle School students, preparing for the Spring production of Matilda the Musical. Our students, including those in the Sixth Form, have experienced a range of careers events including speakers in school and visits to local universities. Our sports students have also shown their talents whether this is through the Sports Leaders, football, rugby, badminton or even futsal!

I hope all students and their families have a joyful and peaceful Christmas holiday – and that the students take the time to appreciate what they have and what they may receive.

Merry Christmas!

'Christmas Gratitude' by Sandra Juanita Nailing

Be thankful at Christmas, and have a good attitude. Refrain from fussing and fighting, as well as being rude.
Be thankful at Christmas, help spread a lot of cheer. Allow the family to be drawn close, allow them to come near.
Be thankful at Christmas, no matter what gift you get. Be grateful with gratitude, and don't easily get upset.
Be thankful at Christmas, help spread some joy and peace. Let it flow out to everyone, refuse to let it cease.
Be thankful at Christmas, maybe you can share the hungry your food. I'm sure they won't waste it, but all of it will be used.
Be thankful at Christmas, don't get caught up into self. Learn to give out to others, so they can share your wealth.

FUTURE 11 WITH NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY

Northumbria University visited school on 1st October to speak to some Year 11 students. The 'Future 11' session covered an introduction to student's post-16 options and post-18 options. The aim of the session was to get students working back from their career goal to their current studies to identify how key decisions they make in the coming years can determine which routes they progress through in the future.



Students were engaged in the activities and began to think about their direction after their GCSE's

SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING

We were delighted to welcome so many students and parents to our Sixth Form Open Evening on 28th November. There were a number of students from external schools as well as our own Year 11 students.

Our faculties enjoyed showcasing our vast range of courses after a welcome from our Head of School, Mr Goodman and then a presentation by Mr Ironside, our Head of Sixth Form highlighting the uniqueness of our Sixth Form and discussing the exciting Sports Academy partnering with Newcastle United Foundation from September 2025.

Executive Head Teacher, Mr Barnes, discussed our new school due to open in September 2025 and the amazing teaching and learning facilities on offer to all students; families then enjoyed some pizza and informal discussions with subject teaching staff to learn more about the Sixth Form Curriculum. It was a fantastic evening, with so many positive conversations. We look forward to seeing many of the students join the Sixth Form in September 2025!

MATILDA THE MUSICAL

We were delighted at the enthusiasm and talent across our school when we held auditions for Matilda the Musical at the beginning of October. Over 100 students came along to showcase their talents, commitment and dedication to making this a fantastic performance. We can't wait to host the performance in March 2025.



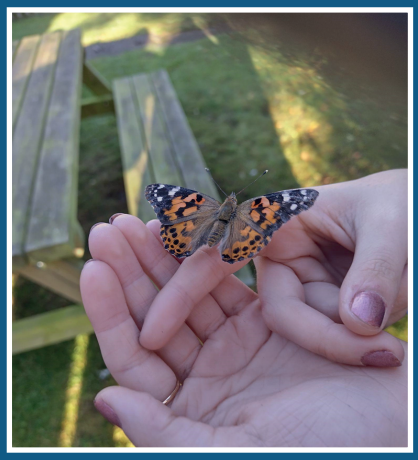
BUTTERFLIES

Staff and students within the SEND Department have had the fortune of watching the metamorphosis of some beautiful butterflies. Butterflies are symbolic for a number of reasons and their journey has been special to each and every student involved. Particularly those who were friendly with Matthew, who passed away in the summer. We have enjoyed watching them change from the tiniest caterpillars to the most beautiful butterflies. There was less enjoyment in hearing Mrs Liddle sing to them for some.

When we set them free the butterflies enjoyed a few moments with the students, resting on their hands. One of them didn't seem to want to leave.

We are looking forward to planning some other activities which will allow students to embrace nature and watch such wonderful processes.





YEAR 9 FUTSAL SUCCESS

Congratulations to our Year 9 Boys for winning the Futsal Competition at Ponteland in November.

Mr Wood's first Astley Trophy!

Futsal is a fast-paced, indoor football based sport played between two teams of five players on a hard court.

The word 'futsal' is a combination of the Spanish words fútbol (football) and sala (hall).



YEAR 9 BOYS FOOTBALL

Our Year 9 boys football team have made an impressive start to the season in both the league and the cup. The team remain unbeaten in all of their fixtures to date.

They opened their account for the season with an impressive 7 - 2 victory over Bede Academy, this was followed by another excellent win 4 - 3 over Ponteland.

Their fine form followed them into the County Cup where they beat a decent Burnside team 3 -2. Barring a controversial last minute penalty that was awarded to Hexham, the team would have had a 100% record but the game finished 3 - 3.

The boys showed tremendous battling qualities in this game coming from 2 - 0 down after 10 minutes.

Good Luck for the rest of the season.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD - BRONZE SUCCESS



We are very proud of our Year 9 and Year 10 students who have successfully completed their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.

Year 9 - Daniel, Christiana, Finley, Theo, William, Phoebe, Rhea, Ben and Danny.

Year 10 - Sophie, Honey, Lana, Charlie, Adam, Alex, Jaden, Megan, Charlie, Oliver, Liam, Harry, Lily and James.

The participants need to complete independent sections for 3 - 6 months (organised and completed by themselves or with a friend), examples include:

- Volunteering - young leaders at Scouts (Seaton Delaval & Cramlington), litter picking, student librarians, sports leaders at the middle schools
- Physical - football, netball, rock climbing, cycling, couch to 5K, walking, swimming
- Skill - Duolingo (learning a new language), learning to cook, learning to code (ICT), crochet

They have to do the expedition: two days and one night, completely self-sufficient and remotely supervised (i.e. no adult walking with them!), carrying all their food & equipment with them. Planning the route and navigating along Hadrian's Wall and cooking a substantial group meal.

It is a big undertaking and does require them to display good communication and teamwork skills, as well as independence and responsibility.

SIXTH FORM VISIT TO AUSCHWITZ

In November, three Sixth Form students were fortunate to be selected to take part in a one day trip to Auschwitz in Poland. The trip, run through the Holocaust Education Trust, gave the students the opportunity to visit both parts of the concentration camp on a guided tour, alongside other Sixth Form students from the North East. Students learnt about the processes involved in the Nazi concentration camps and received a talk from a Rabbi about the lasting impact of the Holocaust. The students were fantastically mature and behaved impeccably.







BEAMISH MUSEUM TRIP

Year 10 students recently took a trip back to the Victorian Era on a visit to Beamish Museum. While there the students completed a carousel of different activities connected to their studies in English Literature of A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens.

Part of the trip involved the students acting the part of charity collectors, collecting donations for the less fortunate from various Victorian business owners.

While a number of people were successful in being highly persuasive to the business owners, nobody could wrangle a shilling out of the solicitor who was a true 'humbug'.

A fantastic opportunity for all involved.

NISSAN ICT TRIP

Some Year 9 students ejoyed a visit to the Nissan plant on 9th December 2024 to experience the production line of the Juke and Qashqai. Students were lucky enough to see the computer systems in action and experience how the production line works.

All students had an excellent day and learnt a lot about the business.

We have another trip booked in January where more Year 9 students can enjoy a similar experience.



YEAR 9 - INTERFORM KINDNESS CHAIN COMPETITION

In the last two weeks of the first half term Year 9 were challenged to create kindness chains in their form time. They filled in the links with examples of kindnesses they had done for people or kindnesses they had received from people. Miss Ferguson wandered around the Year 9 form rooms on Thursday 24th October and counted the chain links. They all looked amazing. The JOINT winners were 9L and 9E with 86 kindness links in their chains. In second place were 9A with 60. 9S, 9T and 9Y also worked hard on theirs and they looked fantastic. No kindness chain is ever too short (like Maths teachers!)

9T made a late entry (04/11/2024) and knocked it out of the park with 147 chain links!

Miss Chadkirk 9L's form teacher said it was lovely for everyone to take time to reflect on the positives for the half term.

Ms Lacey 9T's form teacher said, "Just wanted to let you know we got 147 links in the end for 9T! Not expecting a prize or anything as we were too slow, though thank you so much for this amazing idea as our form really engaged with it!"

I am looking forward to the Christmas leg of the competition! Well done Year 9!

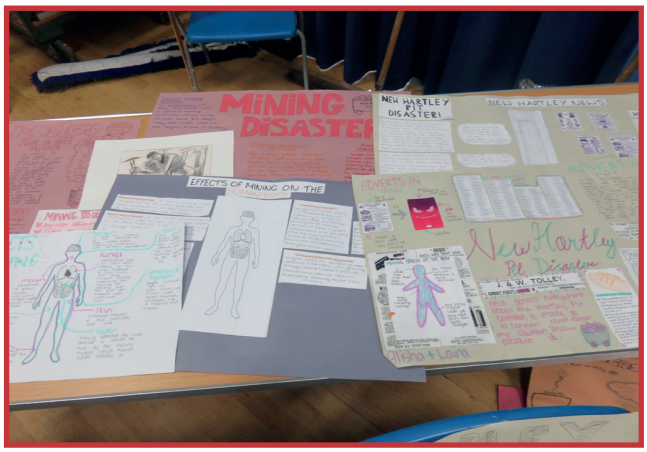


YEAR 9 - HARTLEY PIT DISASTER



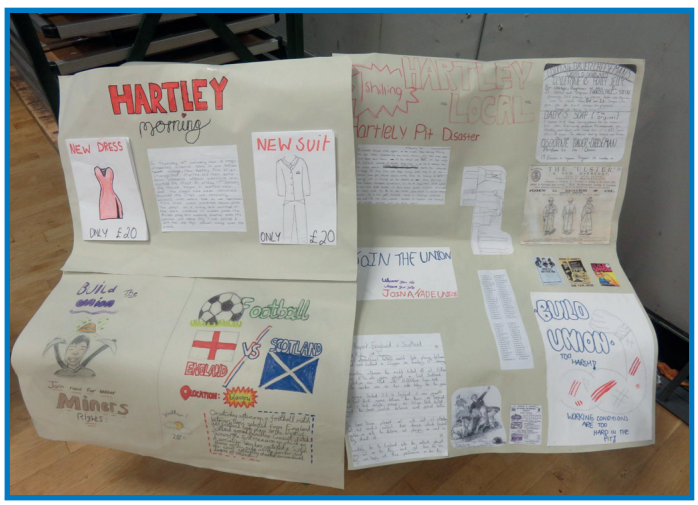
At the end of last half term the whole of Year 9 took part in a three day teaching project about the Hartley Pit Disaster on 16th January 1862. Students learnt about the disaster itself and life in 19th Century Hartley, they debated the moral and ethical issues related to mining and investigated the effects mining has on our bodies. Students were amazed to discover that such a tragedy had taken place locally and that the legacy of the disaster was felt all over the country.

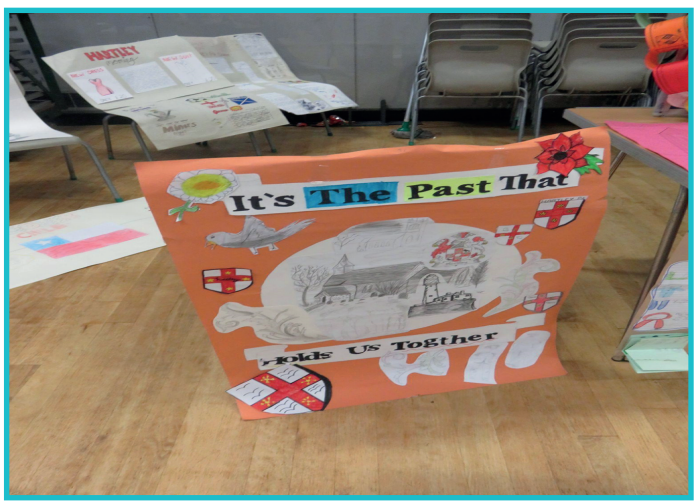
All lessons were devoted to this project over three days; students created a newspaper front page reflecting the events and facts about the disaster, they designed and built union banners and had many discussions relating to mining, what actually happened in the pit and considered the important change in the law on 7th August 1862 which stated that all new mines were to have two shafts and all existing mines were to ensure access to a second shaft before the end of 1864.



The positive engagement from the students was outstanding and a real buzz was created around school.

At the end of the week students showcased their work to each other and their parents. There were some fantastic pieces of work created, the students were very proud of their work and learnt a great deal about mining and the effects of a national disaster in our local area.





SPORTS LEADER CONFERENCE

Eight of our most promising Sports Leaders from Year 10 were selected to take part in a Sports Leadership Conference and planning session at Morpeth Golf Club in September.

The group were treated to a talk from the Boxing Champion, Rachel McKenzie and took part in activities to explore the qualities of a good leader. In one activity, the students had to advocate for a sweet they had been given and convince the rest of us that they had the best sweet. Dan and Luke's rainbow laces just pipped Alice and Katie's love hearts to the top spot.

The group will be working within school to help to engage their peers in a more physically active lifestyle and will be helping the PE staff to deliver a range of engaging activities.





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

School closes for Christmas Holidays
Friday 20th December 2024 at 12pm

Teacher Training Day
Monday 6th January 2025

School reopens for Spring Term
Tuesday 7th January 2025

Years 12 & 13 English Theatre Trip
Thursday 16th January 2025

Year 11 Parents Evening
Thursday 16th January 2025

Year 9 Parents Evening and Pathways Launch
Thursday 30th January 2025

Years 11 & 13 Yearbook Photos
Thursday 6th February 2025

Whole School Careers Day
Friday 7th February 2025

Year 9 Venice Teaching Project
Monday 10th to Friday 21st February 2025

School closes for Half Term Holiday
Friday 21st February 2025

School reopens
Monday 3rd March 2025

World Book Day
Thursday 6th March 2025

Year 11 Geography Field Trip
Thursday 13th and Friday 14th April 2025

Sixth Form Parents Evening
Thursday 20th March 2025

Year 10 Parents Evening
Thursday 10th March 2025

School closes for Easter
Thursday 10th March 2025

Teacher Training Day
Friday 11th March 2025

School reopens for Summer Term
Monday 28th April 2025



We wish all our students and their families a very enjoyable and safe Christmas holiday and look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on **Tuesday 7th January 2025!**