



The Academy
at Shotton Hall

NEWSLETTER

DEC
2023

WINTER

A message from our headteacher...

It has been a very busy term for us at Shotton Hall. We have welcomed new students and staff and seen Year 11 students complete their mock exams. The spirit of the festive season has been strong, within the 12 days of Christmas theme.

Your children really are fantastic. A particular highlight has been listening to them sing – a child's voice and a Christmas carol give a very special type of warmth and feelings of nostalgia.

Students have taken part in a huge range of sporting activities, extra-curricular events and visits this term. It has been a pleasure to see how enthusiastically they have participated and how proudly they have represented themselves and the school.

Finally, I would like to thank parents and carers for your support this term. I look forward with great excitement to seeing our students go from strength to strength in the New Year.

Alex Hook, Head of School

In this issue...



12 days of Christmas

Everyone in school has enjoyed welcoming the festive season with out 12 days of Christmas!



Students lead to the capital

A group of our young musicians performed at the Royal Albert Hall this term.



World Mental Health Day

This term we raised funds for Young Minds.



Everybody Writes Day

Our Year 7s welcomed visitors from a range of professions into school to talk about the role of writing in their careers.

The 12 days of Christmas

We celebrated the festive season in style this month with our 12 days of Christmas. The timetable was jam packed full of exciting festive activities, fundraisers and opportunities to give back to our local community.

We'd like to thank everyone who contributed to our food bank collection. Your donations will help many local families in need this Christmas. Our students also went out in the community to Hawthorns Care Home in Peterlee to sing Christmas carols for the residents and distribute Christmas cards made by our younger students.

Back in school, we enjoyed festive open mic performances, Christmas door decorating and our much-loved Christmas disco. We loved seeing everyone glammed up to dance the night away!



Celebration Station

This term we introduced our brand new Celebration Station where students get to show off their amazing achievements both in school and outside the classroom. We've already seen some amazing achievements and cannot wait to see what they have in store for us next term.

Keep your eye on our social media channels too see what our superstars have been up to.



Black History Month

To mark Black History Month, our fantastic student leaders ran a competition for fellow students to design posters that celebrate music past and present.

Student Leaders Sheryl, Alina and Kiran were proud to crown Lily the Key Stage 3 winner and Aimee the Key Stage 4 winner.



Students perform at iconic Royal Albert Hall

This term a group of our musicians from our school and fellow NELT school, Easington Academy, ventured down to the capital to take part in Music for Youth's Proms at The Royal Albert Hall.

What a fantastic opportunity, well done everyone!



Did you know?

In Columbia, Little Candles' Day, or Día de las Velitas, marks the start of the Christmas season across the nation. Locals across the country place candles and paper lanterns on show in their windows, balconies and front yards. Over the years, the tradition has evolved and now entire towns and cities are lit up around this time of year.



World Mental Health Day

In October we came together and wore a pop of yellow to mark World Mental Health Day. Everyone really got behind the cause and joined in by wearing yellow and taking advantage of our face painting station. A huge thank you for all the cake contributions - we raised £160 for Young Minds, a children's mental health charity.



Did you know?

Every year on 5th December, German children leave a boot or a shoe outside their bedroom door. When they wake up, if they've been good, they'll find their shoe filled with sweets! If not, they'll open their door to find a branch...

Christmas careers

Let's take a look at some careers that really come into their own in the festive period...

Ski instructor

It's certainly a white Christmas when you work in the mountains during the winter months. Working abroad is a fantastic way to broaden knowledge of different cultures, languages and make friends. You'll need a BASI (British Association of Ski Instructors) Level 2 or 3 to get started as an instructor.

Events manager

December is the busiest time for events managers. The role can earn you up to £45,000 per year and usually you'll need an undergraduate degree in events management or any other planning subject. The role is very varied and can see managers juggle everything from small functions to festivals for thousands.

Everybody Writes

This term our Year 7s celebrated Everybody Writes Day. This year we focused on the importance of writing within a range of careers.

From policewoman to journalist, we welcomed various visitors with different professions into school, who delivered workshops about writing in their roles. They also set the group a writing challenge. Some of our students even performed their finished piece to the rest of the year group at the end of the day!

Great work Year 7!



DATES

FOR YOUR DIARY

20 DEC - Break up for Christmas

08 JAN - Back to school

16 FEB - Break up for half term

26 FEB - Back to school

28 MAR - Break up for Easter

Welcome Year 7

We wanted to give a special mention to our new Year 7s who have settled into our school so well this term. We cannot wait to see you flourish next term and beyond!

Odd sock day

This term we celebrated our differences and what makes us unique by wearing our odd socks to school as part of Anti-Bullying Week's Odd Sock Day.



Writing corner

This term Ellie M spoke to Mrs Siddle with a mysterious book in hand. Inside of this book were some of the most beautiful poems that Mrs Siddle had ever read from a student. There were poems about cats, holidays and all kinds of other topics.

Here are just a few of the poems from Ellie:

Wishes and dreams

If my dreams were real
And my wishes came true
My entire life would be full of you
Dancing and signing with you by my side
I know me and you fight sometimes
But you are my world
Not going to lie

Dancing forever

When I dance to the soft music
I get lost and I block everything out
Listening to every beat of every lyric
Dance is my life and forever will be
The spotlight and applause, the competition
I feel truly free

An excerpt by Holly, Year 9

"Yesterday, I was gifted a rose. Fragile and blood red, it stood in my hands. Like a newborn baby, I protected it with my life. Shivering rapidly, my blue, dead-like hands were a shield for my baby. Did you know, my rose is funny looking? The petals are quite deformed and shrivelled so I must take extra care of it. Despite it being peculiar, I still love my rose. When I arrived home, I stayed by her as I slept. My rose is incredibly special to me.

Today, I woke up. My rose looks different. Lying on the floor - petals- grey and dead.

In a frantic panic, I rushed to the place where this wonderful love was brought into my life. Drained and beaten, I had stayed up all night.

Dragging her feet, the doctor came out. My heart struck down; my rose had lost every blood-red petal ... once bathed in beauty, they have now departed from that stem of life.

I'm sorry Ma'am - they have passed ..."

A prologue by Lucy, Year 9

Lucy is writing a short story, *Between The War*. Here is an excerpt

"Fog rolled over the plains, covering all the land that man could see from his bare eye, and even the land beyond where vision stretched. It wasn't that thick, but you couldn't see through it regardless, it hung in the air like a bad smell. No man's land was a vast empty land, nothing grew, nothing lived; life that came here died, it didn't flourish. From the trees, the shrubs, the smallest mice, biggest fox, or just man, nothing flourished, only met their inevitable death too soon. Flowers that once blossomed with the complexions of the stars had now hidden away for their own safety, and had been replaced by burnished metal of the barbed wire, as sharp as the thorns of the roses that bathed in the sun there. But now, it was damp, wet, cold, hideous really. Completely striped off its former glory, that was very likely not to come back now. No dominant colours could be seen, just the same lifeless bland shades. Even the sky was painted a charcoal grey, depressing and as dismal as the land below it. The once green grass was now a mush of sludge, water and mud, that pooled into the small holes and pits in No Man's Land, some of the muck and crud sweeping into the boots and uniforms of dead soldiers which found a rest place in these pits. Some pits had been strategically dug out, somewhere to hide and attack without the enemy knowing, most were made from grenade explosions."