



SPOTLIGHT

Winter newsletter | December 2019



National
Teaching
School



MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome to our Christmassy edition of *Spotlight*... In the lead up to the festivities we have been celebrating the 12 days of Christmas.

The themes of our 12 days of Christmas activities have been kindness and celebrating uniqueness.

The festivities started with the Christmas tree in reception. After that it was non-stop Christmas celebrations with extra special open mic performances, a Christmas lunch, a disco, a movie night, Christmas jumper day and much more.

We have had 'Mrs Claus' calling in every day and providing names from the 'good list'. Those who featured on the list got a free lunch for themselves and friends.

Take a look at our website or social media channels to see everything that has been happening!

Thank you for all the donations for the food bank, this makes a massive difference to people and families in our local area.

Of course, all students have been working hard throughout the term with first assessments showing that great progress is being made. Year 11 deserve a special mention after sitting their first mock exams a few weeks ago. We promise that all the hard work will pay off! Uniform and attendance have been great this term from all year groups; a great start to the academic year.

Now go grab yourself a hot chocolate, put your feet up and enjoy the read. See you all in the new year.

Miss A Hook, Head of School



Students support Children in Need

This year, for Children in Need, The Academy held a 'Bake Off' and bake sale to raise money for this great cause.

Continued overleaf...



Students support Children in Need

Continued from front page...

We would like to say a huge thank you to all those who contributed to our 'Bake Off' competition and bake sale by buying, selling or baking the tasty creations.

We had lots of fantastic entries including Malteser brownies, strawberry meringues, red velvet cake and mouthwatering cookies, which all sold out in record time. After a tough decision, the winners were decided and as follows:

- Mrs Bridgewater - best traybake
 - Mrs Armstrong - best cupcakes
 - Mrs Heseltine - best two-tiered cake
 - Mr Simpson - best biscuit (which he claimed were the first he had ever baked!)
- We raised an impressive £270 for the fantastic cause - thank you!



THE JOKE CORNER

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

Frosted flakes

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 20 Dec** Break up for Christmas
- 06 Jan** Return to school
- 05 Feb** Young Americans visit
- 14 Feb** Break up for half term
- 24 Feb** Return to school
- 03 Apr** Break up for Easter
- 20 Apr** Return to school
- 08 May** May Day bank holiday

To keep up to date with all news and events please visit:

www.shottonhallacademy.co.uk



Students brighten up the Hawthorns Care Centre

A group of thoughtful students brightened up the Hawthorns Care Centre in the lead up to Christmas by volunteering to read stories to the elderly.

Half of the students visited the dementia unit during their monthly tea party and others visited the residential unit to read at their bedsides.

Miss Pounder commented: "Students really enjoyed speaking to the residents and found reading to them very rewarding."

The residents enjoyed the visit so much that they have requested that our students come back regularly.



Top dogs!

Reading is a great way to reduce stress, expand your vocabulary and improve your memory.

Here are 11 students who know this all too well as they are this term's top library borrowers and Spotlight would like to congratulate them:

- Alysa Brown: 22 books
- Ethan Forrester: 21 books
- Isabelle Wilkinson: 11 books
- Skye Downing: 10 books
- Ben Lawrence: 10 books
- Ellie-Mae Marshall: 10 books
- Shay Cope: 9 books
- Rihanna Evans: 9 books
- Grace Glendinning: 9 books
- Anthony Hardy: 9 books
- Grace Lin: 9 books

Feeling inspired? You might make the list next term. We hope you're feeling motivated to visit the library and top up on your vocabulary.

We're on Twitter and Facebook!



Christmas fun facts

Mince Pies

Although now mostly vegetarian, in Victorian times, mince pies were made with beef and spices.

Noel

The word Noel derives from the French expression "les bonnes nouvelles" or "the good news".

Tangerines

The tradition of putting tangerines in stockings comes from 12th-century French nuns who left socks full of fruit, nuts and tangerines at the houses of the poor.

The Birth of Jesus

Many theologians estimate that Jesus wasn't born on December 25 but sometime in September between 6BC and 30AD.

Christmas Ban

In 1647, after the English Civil War, Oliver Cromwell banned festivities. The law wasn't lifted until 1660.

Wassailing

Carols began as an old English custom called wassailing, toasting neighbours to a long life.

Turkey

Before turkey, the traditional Christmas meal in England was a pig's head and mustard.

Christmas Trees

Nearly 60 million Christmas trees are grown each year in Europe.

Budding chef...

We would like to say a huge well done to Demi Strange in Year 10 who created an amazing dessert breakfast!

Demi's dish was inspired by famous food illusionist, Ben Churchill.

The students were tasked with creating an interesting dish and Demi took her dessert to the next level, turning it into a full English breakfast!

Her dish consists of panna cotta egg with mango coulis, chocolate mousse sausage, marzipan beans, grilled lemon sponge, marshmallow bacon and raspberry ketchup.



The power of words

As part of the development of our students' 'cultural capital', Year 7 and 8 students spent time looking at the impact that words can have on our sense of identity and in society.

The session consisted of students exploring the positive and negative impact of the language that they use. Students specifically looked at how the term 'grass' has such a negative impact on our school and the wider community.

Students focussed on the importance of not ridiculing those who tell the truth and why it is important to celebrate brave people who go against the crowd and stand up for what they believe in.



Reading mentors

A group of Year 11 students have volunteered to take on the role of 'reading mentors' for younger students. They meet in the library once a week to read with Year 7 and 8 students.

The younger students were given the opportunity to select their reading book from a range of options from the library. This is a great opportunity for older students to gain experience as mentors for younger students.

As well as building confidence in our older students, similarly, our Year 7 and 8 students have been given a great chance to improve their confidence and ability while enjoying reading in a new environment!

Study skills

Throughout this term, students from all year groups have been attending 'Study Skills' sessions with Mrs Scott and Miss Ingram in a bid to improve their knowledge of how to revise effectively and independently.

Students learned how our memory works and were given research-based theory on effective revision strategies such as dual coding, spacing and interleaving. They were also given practical ideas on revision tools with explanations on how to use them effectively; flashcards, mind maps, revision clocks, loci method are to name but a few.

Departments throughout the school and across the curriculum then spent time with students allowing them to have a go at making the revision materials for themselves. This came in particularly useful for our Year 11 students who were due to sit their mock exams shortly after receiving this session. Flashcards and revision clocks were seen in abundance around the school in the run up!

Here are a few tips that apply to all year groups to aid revision:

- Revise in a well-lit environment which is clutter free and quiet.
- Plan for revision considering a timetable and what you want to achieve.
- Allow some treat time for yourself as a reward for completing revision.

The 'Study Skills' session has also been delivered to parents on parents' evenings to allow adults at home to help students to prepare for exams and assessments at home, so if all else fails, speak to someone at home who may be able to give you some tips on how to revise best!

Budding artists...

The first term at The Academy at Shotton Hall has seen students bid for first place in a calendar art competition...

The competition involved students creating a piece of artwork based on one of the months of the year to form a calendar - we had a lot of fantastic entries.

A winner was chosen for each month and after a

very tough decision, the winning students won a pack of art materials and a sketchbook.

We look forward to seeing the finished calendar.



Christmas Time: A Poem

Ecstatic children race down the stairs,

As fast as cheetahs, hoping for stockings filled with cuddly bears.

You hop and jump when you see the piles and piles,

Excited cheers you can hear for miles and miles.

Wrapping paper drowns the floor,

When you hear your family knocking at the door.

Christmas wishes spread all around,

And more and more gifts are placed on the ground.

The smell of turkey almost done,

You hear a call and begin to run.

You wash your hands and sit at the table,

Stuffing your face as much as you are able!

Bang, bang, bang as crackers are pulled apart,

Just before the Christmas movie begins to start.

You sit and watch with a heart full of joy.

The children are eager to play with every new toy!

It's bed time now and the hot chocolate is made,

As you give the chocolate box one last raid.

You cosy up in your warm bed,

As magical dreams of the day fill your head.

By Esme Thwaites



Students remember

This year, for Remembrance Day, students and staff at the Academy showed their respects to our fallen soldiers and war heroes.

Staff and students fell into total quiet during the two-minute silence.

Mrs Livingston read the poem 'In Flanders' Fields' and Mr Robson played The Last Post, which students heard through the tannoy system.

Cadets got into formation in the reception area before heading outside to march.

It was a truly poignant and respectful time that highlighted the respect that the school has for those who fought for this country.

Christmas movie checklist

One thing is for certain at Christmas; you are going to be lazy and want to eat chocolate while watching cheesy Christmas films!

Here is your one stop shop checklist:

1) Love Actually

Everyone's favourite feel-good Christmas film. A tale of how love brings everyone together.

2) The Polar Express

An inspiring adventure!

3) Elf

When Buddy travels to New York City - comedy gold!

4) Home Alone

An oldie, but a goodie!

5) The Holiday

If you haven't seen it you're missing out!

6) The Grinch

Who doesn't love the Grinch?

7) It's a Wonderful Life

An absolute classic and heart-warmer.

8) Arthur Christmas

It needs no introduction; we've all seen it!

9) Santa Clause

Another absolute classic!

10) Jingle All the Way

A great film about determination to track down a toy!

There you have it! Sit back, relax in your pyjamas and get cosy on the sofa!



Keep an eye out on our social channels for Mr Robson as the Academy's own Excitable Edgar!



Everybody Writes Day

Although Everybody Writes Day is no longer an 'official' day, the Academy's English department loved it so much that they decided to keep the tradition going this year anyway.

The day was initially set up by the Book Trust and the National Literacy Trust to encourage students and young people to take their writing beyond the classroom.

This year our students had the task of writing a speech about being a good person.

All pupils took part in the writing and a representative

was chosen from each group to deliver the speech to everyone.

A total of 24 pupils took to the stage before Sophie Steventon, who represented the S3 group, was chosen as the winner.

She was chosen for the quality of her writing and her calm and confident delivery.

Well done Sophie!



Erasmus visit

This term we took part in the Columbus to Atlantis Erasmus project where we hosted eight students from schools in Slovenia, Poland, Italy and Cyprus.

The project aimed to look at how our cultures have more similarities than differences.

During the week the students took part in team building exercises, creative writing workshops and film making at the Tyne Cinema.

During the evenings our students showed our special visitors around Durham Cathedral and even squeezed in trips to York and Whitby.



Zach writes his own novel!

Our talented year 7 student, Zach Wilson, has written his own novel this half term!

The short story, The Lion Guard: On the Western Coast is a fully illustrated and bound novel all created by Zach himself. The Lion Guard is based on a fictional character, Alfred Osborn, a knight who is forced to fight against the fearful Dragon Army on the Western Coast. It is a gripping tale of life, death and bravery.

Well done Zach! We cannot wait to see what you do next!

Halloween spooktacular

Back in October, students took to the dance floor at our annual spooktacular Halloween disco for an evening of dancing with plenty of ghoulish games.

We had some fantastic costumes on display!



Let's get festive!

To get us all into the Christmas spirit, our question to teachers this half term has a Christmassy twist! We asked the staff at The Academy at Shotton Hall - 'What is your most valued Christmas tradition?'

Here is what they had to say:

Mr Bradley: "Christmas Eve is family night with a takeaway!"

Mrs McManus: "Every year, I buy new pyjamas to wear on Christmas Eve. My whole family wear the same. We cook pizza and watch a film together; that is what it is all about, family time."

Mrs Brennan: "Making my kids wait at the top of the stairs whilst their Dad goes into the sitting room and puts on a light just in case Santa is still there or has fallen asleep on the couch. My kids are in their 20s now..."

Miss Pounder: "Watching Christmas films with my sister at my Mam and Dad's house on Christmas Eve - we usually eat the cheese that we are not supposed to eat until Christmas Day."

Miss Peel: "Midnight mass is my most valued tradition at Christmas time."

Miss Stead: "Elf on the Shelf is a big hit in our house, especially when he delivers new pyjamas on Christmas Eve. However, my most valued tradition is the candle I light on Christmas morning for my Mam and leave it to burn during the whole day."

Mrs Armstong: "For me, it is just having everyone in my family together in one place as it does not happen very often. Sometimes it's not even on Christmas day because some people are working - it's whatever day we are all free but it's magical."

Miss Wearmouth: "A Christmas pie. We don't eat turkey or meat on Christmas Day as my sister is a vegetarian, so each year we make a different pie."

Miss Murphy: "Boxing Day is the best part for me. On Boxing Day, the whole family get together in one house to eat cheese, celebrate, catch up and be generally merry!"

Mrs Ogden: "Fenwick's window, Fenwick's toy department or Fenwick's Santa! It's all about Fenwick's at Christmas time!"

STEM club's 'Chemis-tree'

Our STEM club got into the festive spirit and created their very own Christmas tree with a STEM club twist!



Shotton Hall

SCITT

School Centred Initial Teacher Training

Teacher training opportunities

Did you know that The Academy at Shotton Hall helps to train the next generation of new teachers and are looking for new recruits to start in September 2020?

Through The North East Learning Trust, we are a partner of Shotton Hall SCITT, the Trust's very own outstanding teacher training provider.

Trainees start their training here at the Academy before undertaking placements in schools right across the North East.

Applications are now open for primary and secondary courses starting in September 2020 with bursaries of up to £26k available for certain subjects.

To find out about entry requirements and the opportunities available, as well as hearing from people who have taken the leap and changed career visit: www.shottonhallscitt.co.uk