



SPOTLIGHT

Winter newsletter | December 2021



National
Teaching
School



MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome to our Christmassy edition of *Spotlight*...

As we approach the end of the term, and indeed the end of the year, it is always a time for reflection and consideration of what has gone before. Recently most things start with things like 'one of the most extraordinary years most of us have ever witnessed in our lifetime', 'unprecedented times', or worse some references to whatever 'normal' is. I am going to try and avoid this. This is the kids only time in this bit of their lives and we are not wishing it away. Rather, we are going to do what we always do and make it the best it can be. Celebrate all their achievements large and small. No shade over this time or them.

I look around and see generally happy students and that is testimony to both you and them. You should be proud of your child(ren). We certainly are. We have a theme for the year... 'advice to my 16 year old self,' based on the idea of the quote from

Eleanor Roosevelt: *"Learn from the mistakes of others. You cant live long enough to make them all yourself."*

Over the holidays, please dispense your advice freely and liberally. Reminisce and share stories of you and the advice you would give yourself at their age. I can guarantee they will be interested in your school days and experiences.

From me it would be 'stand up straighter, hunching your shoulders doesn't make you smaller, it just makes your shoulder ache. You'll regret it later, it really isn't worth the pain'.

From the staff we wish you and your family a very happy, peaceful Christmas. Warmest wishes,

Miss A Hook
Head of School



Year 9 are on the good list!

Year 9 students have been spreading some Christmas kindness by making Christmas cards for residents in local residential care homes.

The cards turned out wonderfully well with some lovely messages inside. They were delivered to three local residential homes and have hopefully put a smile on people's faces this Christmas.

12 days of Christmas celebrations

The end of this term has been exciting to say the least! We've been counting down the days to the big day with out 12 days of Christmas.

Our festive fortnight included activities which helped to spread kindness, get involved in charity work and have lots of fun.

It wasn't just the students who got to have all the fun, our staff got involved too. After school, with help from the art department, our staff created their own clay Christmas decorations.

We would like to extend our thanks to our students and their families who have kindly donated food to our annual local foodbank appeal. Your donations make a real difference.

IMPORTANT DATES for your diary

17 DEC Break up for Christmas

05 JAN Back to school

18 FEB Break up for half term

28 FEB Back to school

Stay up to date by checking our website www.shottonhallacademy.co.uk

Christmas literary quiz

1. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, what do the Dursleys give Harry for Christmas?
2. In what classic novel does the protagonist set sail for a sea voyage on a cold Christmas day
3. Which character declares "Merry Christmas, one and all!" in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol?
4. In which children's classic is it 'always winter but never Christmas'?
5. What year was Clement C Moore's poem 'The Night Before Christmas' first published?
6. Chris van Allsburg's book The Polar Express was adapted into a festive film led by which Hollywood star?
7. McFly's Dougie Poynter and Tom Fletcher's first-ever children's book was a festive one about a dinosaur which did what?
8. In the classic Christmas tale The Snowman by Raymond Briggs, where do the Snowman and the boy go on their evening adventure?

ANSWERS: 1. A 50-pence piece, 2. Moby Dick, 3. Tiny Tim, 4. CS Lewis' The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, 5. 1823, 6. Tom Hanks, 7. Pooped Christmas! 8. Walking in the air

Everybody Writes Day

This term our Year 7 students took part in *Everybody Writes Day* - the theme this year was 'What it means to be a good person'.

Each class in Year 7 worked together on producing their own speeches about what they believed made a good person. There were many ideas from excellent manners and helping the vulnerable, to being proactive on climate change.

Each class then decided on two or three students that would deliver the class speech to the rest of the year group on the stage in the performance hall. This would be a nerve-wracking experience for any public speaker, but the standard from these students was out of this world!

They performed so eloquently and would give the likes of Emma Watson, Barack Obama and Martin Luther King a run for their money!

The performances reflected the excellent work that all students put into preparing their speeches and the teachers had the difficult decision on deciding an overall winner. However, the competition was so high they narrowed it down to three winners:

Zach Tinnion, Emily Redhead and Charlotte Tweed

Lexi Johnson, Lilly Cammock, Olly Nichol

Katie Stirman and Isabelle Rutherford



Science just got Christmassy

Now Dasher, now Dancer, now Prancer and Vixen!

The science department got into the Christmas spirit by looking at friction and investigating ways to make Santa's life easier (and the reindeer!), finding out which surfaces would slow the sleigh down the most.



JOKE CORNER

Who tells the best Christmas jokes?

Reindeer. They sleigh every time.

What does the Queen call her Christmas Broadcast?

The One Show,

We're social!

Did you know that our school regularly posts on social media sites, Facebook and Twitter?

Our social media pages are a great way to connect to our online Shotton Hall community. You can find photos, videos and important updates on our pages and see what your youngsters are up to in the classroom. If you don't follow our pages already, please give us a like or a follow to stay in the loop!



@shottonhall



@shottonhallacademy

Meet out student leaders...

Our new students leaders are settling into their brand new roles. Here's what they had to say...

"Hi everyone, I'm Luke and as you all probably know by now I'm your head boy. My role in school is to run the school council with the rest of the team and to come up with ideas that we can put into practice. I'm also a representative of all students so anything that you think or want, I can try and put forward. I also like talking so it's good that's also part of my role! Outside of school, I am in the RAF air cadets and I love aviation so if you're talking about anything plane related you'll have me hooked. I hope everyone has a wonderful year!"

Luke, Head Boy

"Hi everyone, my name is Olivia and my job as head girl at Shotton Hall is to basically be a spokesperson and representative for the student voice. I work alongside head boy (cadet Boxall) and the other student leaders with Miss Mcmanus to form the leadership team. Here we have regular meetings discussing possible changes in school, run events, campaigns, and organise committees. If anyone has any questions or opinions about activities in school, concerns, or even just wants to have a chat, I love speaking to people so would be more than happy to help. Outside of school I enjoy going out with my friends and walking my dog, Belle. I've really enjoyed the start of this school year and I'm looking forward to speaking to you all. I hope everyone has a lovely Christmas and a happy new year!"

Olivia, Head Girl

"Hi I'm Alarice, I love to travel and see new places, I want to try and visit every country possible in my life. Outside of school I dance, I love to compete and perform on the big stage. A fun fact about me is that one side of my family is in South Africa and the other half is in Scotland. You might also recognise me from somewhere, I actually have two TikTok videos with over 1 million views! If you've seen them, make sure you like them."

Alarice, Head of extra-curricular activities

"Hi, I'm Charlotte and i'm your deputy head girl. My role is to work alongside the heads and support them in making decisions and helping out students. I love to read and you would probably find me listening to music 24/7, and I am also shamelessly obsessed with Harry Styles!"

Charlotte, Deputy Head Girl



The big debate

This term, the Shotton Hall Debate Team participated in two prestigious competitions.

In November, Tom Harvey, Emily Hudson, and Thomas Roxby represented Shotton Hall in the first NELT Debate Day.

Arguing that junk food should not be banned in schools, the team went head-to-head with speakers from Teesdale School. Tom excelled as our Speaker, winning the award for best overall speaker on the day. Emily Hudson acted as chair, keeping proceedings under control, and helpfully summarising the debate for the audience. Putting questions to the other side, Thomas Roxby provoked an interesting discussion about Teesdale School's arguments.

The week after, six more members of the debate group competed in the national speaking competition of the English-Speaking Union.

Rihanna Evans and Jack Masters were outstanding as speakers, arguing that CCTV is not a threat to liberty and that free speech does not include the right to be offensive. Our chairs, Alyssa Lawton and Alex Turner, kept the debates moving, and our questioners, Harry Woodley and Grace Glendinning, responded well to the opposing teams.

The performances reflected the excellent work that all members of the debate group put into preparing for the events. They were a credit to our school!



Students cook up a storm

Our student leaders raised a brilliant £346 for the Macmillan charity thanks to their tasty bake sale this term. Great job everyone!



Hold onto your chips!

You may have seen a rather large seagull around school this term...

As part of their active citizenship project, Harry, Sean, Shay and Ben decided to tackle two problems that they felt strongly about. With the aim of helping climate change, the group wanted to reduce litter and in turn, reduce seagulls around school.

The team found a very novel way to grab their fellow students' attention and get signatures for their litter (and seagull) free school petition!

Lest We Forget

The Academy at Shotton Hall remembers...

This year, Year 10 student, Alfie, laid a poppy wreath on behalf of our students for Remembrance Day.

Attached to the wreath were messages from our students to the fallen and those who have, and are currently serving. Here is a selection of those included on the wreath...

'Thanks for all the amazing work you do and your dedication to our country, Lest we forget.'

'Thanks for your resilience and bravery, we are grateful for how you have put your lives at risk to save our country and community. Our country would be vulnerable and unsafe without you, Thanks a lot for your service.'

'We are grateful for everything the soldiers have sacrificed for our county, lest we forget.'

'Respect the fallen, they fell for you, we will always be grateful.'

'Gone but not forgotten, we are so grateful for your bravery and dedication to keep us safe. Rest in peace.'

'Thanks for all those who suffered in the war, without you, our lives would be very different.'

'To live in the hearts we leave behind'



They did the monster mash

Back in October students got spooky for their Halloween disco. In preparation for the disco we held spooky makeup classes so that our party guests could perfect their gruesome looks!

When the disco rolled around, it was certainly a thriller! We loved seeing students attend the very spooky affair. There was lots of dancing, singing and plenty of fun with friends. We had a fantastic turnout and we absolutely loved all of your amazing costumes.

We were surprised to that the clear favourite song of the night was Neil Diamond's Sweet Caroline!



Watch out, Kayla's about

Our very own karate kid, Kayla, was crowned the winner of the KUGB Northern Region Championships for the girls under 5'3 category this term.

Not only that, she only went and grabbed gold again the following week at the KUGB National Youth & Student Championships in Chesterfield! Keep up the amazing work, Kayla!

Top 10 must-see Christmas films

Sit back and relax this Christmas. Why not grab a hot chocolate and pop on a festive film or two. Here's our top picks...

1. Home Alone
2. The Polar Express
3. Santa Claus
4. Jingle All the Way
5. The Christmas Chronicles
6. The Christmas Prince
7. The Grinch
8. Elf
9. Miracle on 34th Street
10. It's a Wonderful Life



They're on the ball!

Our fantastic footballers have had a great term outside of the classroom!

Year 10's Amelia was selected to represent the North of England in the next round of football trials for the English Schools Football Association Girls' International team.

Not only this, but she was also selected to attend an England football camp. What a fantastic achievement.

It was also success for Year 11 student, Dylan, this term, who has been picked for the county football team. The team started off strong winning their first match against North Yorkshire with a staggering 8-4 win!

Summer had some brilliant football news this term when she was selected to represent Durham Girls Under 16 squad!

She also had the opportunity to carry out a high-performance goalkeeping development course at Northumbria University Sports Department.

When it comes to rugby, Mia was bringing in the good news! Shewas selected to attend Darlington Mowden Park Rugby Clubs Centre of Excellence. Mia has played rugby for Houghton RFC for many years and it is great to see her take the next steps in her rugby playing career. We all wish you the best of luck in your bright future.

We cannot wait to see the sporting achievements of our students in the new year. You are all fantastic and we are so proud.



It's a 10 from us!

Our students are a very talented bunch when it comes to dancing. Here's what some of our superstars have been up to this term...

Watch out Ashley Banjo! Dancer, Aflie, and his dance crew bagged a brilliant second place in the *Can You Dance* competition.

The group qualified for the national super-convention which will be held in Liverpool in 2022 - fantastic news!

Alfie and the group competed with their street/breakdance routine against many other fantastic contenders. With plenty of different styles on show, the team pushed themselves out of their comfort zone and it truly paid off. Keep up the fantastic work!

It doesn't stop there! We'd also like to give a special mention to dance superstar, Katie Jane, who won the Under 14s beginner category and brought home not one, not two, but a whopping 7 trophies from her latest dance festival. Keep up the amazing work.

Year 7's Lexi shone in the ballroom when she competed in the Ballroom and Latin National Competition at Blackpool Ballroom back in October. After competing against some tough competition, Lexi achieved some fantastic results including 3rd place in swing. We are so proud of her hard work and determination.



**North East
SCITT**

Did you know that our school is a partner of North East SCITT - an organisation that trains new teachers in schools across the north east - including in ours!

Whether you're a new graduate, in your final year of university or considering a change of career (it's never too late you know!), North East SCITT's high-quality school-based initial teacher training courses can provide you with the best start to a new career in teaching. They are based in the North East Learning Trust's lead school, The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee, but training happens in schools all across the region.

The quality of training they offer is rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted for both their primary and secondary courses. Along with this they have a proven track record of amazing

results and high employment rates. The programme gives you the opportunity to learn to teach 'on-the-job'. Unlike traditional university courses, you are in the classroom from the outset, interacting with pupils and teachers and learning first hand the knowledge and skills you'll need to become an outstanding teacher.

You will practise in a broad range of schools, gaining experience in different areas including special educational needs and disabilities, behaviour management, English as an additional language, phonics, and maths mastery (for primary only).

You will also be allocated a subject mentor from a team of specialists with vast experience who will introduce you to school life and help you to learn how to teach your subject.

At the end of the 10 month course you'll be a qualified teacher with a PGCE from Durham University.

So if you're thinking of teaching - there is no better place than through our school partners North East SCITT - please get in touch - we know they would love to speak to you!

Subjects available:

**Primary
Computing**

**Design and
technology**

Drama

English

History

Geography

Maths

Music

**Physical
education**

**Religious
education**

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

**Modern
foreign
languages**



Try a teacher training taster day...

If you're thinking about training to teach, you can come and spend the morning at The Academy at Shotton Hall in Peterlee or Browney Academy in Durham to get a taste of what teacher training is like. Find out more and book your place at:

www.northeastscitt.co.uk/taster

Apply now for Sept 2022

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