



SPOTLIGHT

Winter newsletter | December 2020



National
Teaching
School



MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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

For this final Spotlight of 2020 I'd like to turn to the words of Charles Dickens for his sentiment...

"it was the best of times, it was the worst of times"

which sums up this term!

All of the big things in school have changed and how we do things is very different - at times this has been very frustrating to both us and the kids. "Why?" is something I've heard a lot this term (something I hear in my own head practically hourly!). However, people's response (staff, parents and kids) has been stoic, understated and accommodating to what at times has been is very far from 'normal.'

We have now been open for as

long as we were closed. Overall, the effect of covid has been less than we had anticipated during this term. It certainly hasn't affected everyone equally, but large scale disruption to lots of families has been avoided. This in part, is testimony to the fact the kids have done exactly what they have been asked and parents have acted very sensibly. For this – THANK YOU! We appreciate very much how you have managed the recurrent daily issues that exist now that didn't before. We hope that 2021 will bring better times.

Happy Christmas and best wishes from everyone here.

Miss A Hook
Head of School



'News and Views' with our student leaders

Every Monday, from 3.30pm to 4.30pm, our student leaders run 'News and Views' on Teams. Sept reps can discuss issues during sept and then feedback anything interesting or important for the leaders to discuss.

Continued overleaf...

Student leaders

Continued...



There is also a new student leadership page on student POD - just click the student leadership button on the student POD homepage to see videos and further information. Use the link provided to contact the team if you would like to share any ideas, questions or concerns.

The student leadership team consists of:

Head Boy, Evan Taylor

Head Girl, Ellie Crawford

Deputy Head Boy, Ben Olver

Deputy Head Girl, Chloe Friberg

The student leaders are looking forward to hearing your ideas for improving the school!

To get in touch and share your ideas email:
student.leaders@shottonhallacademy.co.uk



We're social!

Follow our social media accounts to stay up to date with all of the latest news from around the Academy!

IMPORTANT DATES for your diary

Due to the uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we cannot commit to any fixed school events at the moment.

Please keep checking our website and social media channels for the latest updates.



Meet the tutor

As live lessons are delivered via Teams and homework is often set online through INSIGHT and email, access to online platforms is vital.

This term, sept tutors have been running popular 'meet the tutor' sessions after school to ensure all students have access to Office 365 and INSIGHT. During these sessions tutors have been checking that students can hear and speak to their teachers via microphone and that they can perform simple tasks on Microsoft Teams such as putting their hand up to contribute to a video call and returning an assignment.

If you're experiencing any technology problems, don't hesitate to speak to your tutor for assistance!



@shottonhall



@shottonhallacademy

A guide to Covid-19 at the Academy

Returning to school can be exciting, but we all must remember to follow the important rules. Due to the coronavirus, the Academy has put restrictions in place to make our return to school as safe as possible.

Each year group now has its own bubble and dedicated areas in school as well as different start and finish times to reduce crowds. You must make sure that you maintain distance between friends, teachers and anyone else in school. Try not to touch things such as railings, walls and doors unnecessarily. However, if you do, there are plenty of sanitisation stations and soap dispensers all around the school for you to use.

Travelling to, from and around school requires you to wear a mask – don't forget yours! Plus, to be extra safe, there is tape across the front of each classroom – you should stay in your seat once you're seated and your teacher will stay behind that line. This is to keep everyone safe.

If you're self-isolating, don't worry, your teachers will live stream their lessons and send work for you to complete so that you don't fall behind!

If you're not sure about any of these rules, just ask a teacher and they will help you understand what to do. Stay safe and remember – hands, face, space!

BY Kaidon Muir, Lily Grady
AND Jack Philpott

* Build a perfect snowman

You can't deny that when it snows, all you want to do is go outside and enjoy this rare occurrence. Whether having a snowball fight or making snow angels, one thing that everyone has done is build a snowman... but do you know how to make the best?

Firstly, get your hat, scarf and gloves on as it is going to be cold! Then, go to an area full of snow and create a small snowball. After that, start to roll your ball along the snow until it is large and round.

Now you can create your second snowball, which should be smaller than your first and not as heavy. Your third, and last, ball should be the size of your head... or maybe a bit bigger!

You should stack your snowballs on top of one another – using the largest as a base, create the classic

snowman shape we all know and love! Now it is time for the best part – decoration. You need two stones for the eyes; a carrot for his nose; six stones for his mouth; two sticks for his arms and a hat, scarf and stones to make his buttons. You now have the perfect snowman for your snow day. Hopefully we'll get some snow!



Welcome Year 7!

I think it's safe to say that no-one could have predicted what has happened this year, and it hasn't been easy. But this September we were back! Back at school, back at proper learning, at seeing friendly faces - although they're hiding behind a mask. This year, Shotton Hall has welcomed all of our new Year 7s!

Under normal circumstances, you'd have had all of your classes in different parts of the school, you'd have been able to eat in the dining hall at dinner and use the finger scanner to pay for it, you'd see other year groups at break time and dinner time and some of you would probably have got lost on the way to your lessons! Things are different this year, but that's ok!

So, how has your experience been in school so far? Have you enjoyed it? Being in Year 9, I suppose that I can give you some advice: if you're not

ok, if there is something you'd like to talk about, there are teachers all around for you to talk to (from two metres apart, of course) or you can contact them online. So, don't think that because of the new rules you can't talk, or can't be heard: you can, you always can.

Moving on, is there anything that you've really enjoyed at school, or anything that you haven't? Personally, I've enjoyed being able to simply see my friends again after six months apart and having conversations face to face where I don't have to type out a message. I've also enjoyed finding out my new classes and getting to know my new teachers, as I'm sure you have too.

So, sanitize your hands, wear your mask, socially distance and have fun! Oh, and don't forget to work hard!

BY KATY COOPER





Make your mark

This year our students registered to take part in 'Make Your Mark', as part of UK Parliament Week to give students the opportunity to get involved and have their voices heard on both local and national issues.

Students voted for the issues which matter most to them such as free university fees, child poverty, racism and lowering the voting age. The issues with the most votes will be debated by members of Youth Parliament, who will campaign to ensure that the views of young people are listened to by decision makers.

Make Your Mark is one of the most important and influential ways young people can take part in a democratic process, meaning our students have a chance to influence decision makers who can make a real difference!



We're wearing ODD SOCKS for Anti-Bullying Week. Will you?

Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-Bullying week ran from Monday 16 to Friday 20 November and all students at the Academy took part by taking an active stand against bullying.

The perfect excuse not to match, 'Odd Socks Day' started the week off on a positive note to celebrate our uniqueness. Many students and staff came to school in weird and wacky combinations of socks, from crazy patterns to a fluorescent pair.

Students also listened to an anti-bullying assembly in sept and discussed their own experiences of standing up to bullying. We talked about being actively anti-bullying, and how crucial it is to report bullying, no matter how small it seems.

Although everything is different this year and we couldn't have our anti-bullying convention or any of the usual inter-year activities, the message remains the same: all bullying is wrong and everyone has a role to play in stopping it.



We are a family

We are a family. A family so unique and caring that our positivity spreads like a raging wildfire. We are there when our friends feel down and we are there when our friends feel joyful. No matter who you are male, female, non-binary, gay, straight, bisexual, black or white you have a place in this family. When we work together, we bring about a positivity far greater than anyone could have ever imagined. We come together as not just peers but as a true family.

Whenever you feel like your life is ruined, I want you to remember that to see a rainbow you must first see the rain. Kintsugi is a Japanese art of repairing things by gluing things together and highlighting the broken areas in silver, gold or platinum. For you in this scenario, there is nothing left to do but start the process of repairing. The art of kintsugi chooses to celebrate the cracks rather than pretend the worst never happened. Suddenly the cracks became part of the story and this should be true in life. Be proud of your emotions – they make you what you are!

As a family it is our responsibility to look out for each other. Helen Keller once said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much", so let's spread our positivity and the true meaning of unity.

BY JASMINE STEVENS, YEAR 7



JOKE CORNER

Who tells the best Christmas jokes?

Reindeer. They sleigh every time.

Annoyingly long words you'll never need to know...

Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane – A pesticide banned in the UK.

Hexakosioihexekontahexaphobia - The fear of the number "666."

Humuhumunukunukuapua'a – A Hawaiian trigger fish.

Floccinaucinihilipilification - The longest non-technical English word. It means an estimation of something as worthless.

Nudiustertian - Of, or relating to, the day before yesterday.

Overmorrow – The day after tomorrow.

Antidisestablishmentarianism - Position to the disestablishment of the Church of England.

BY JOSH LOMOND



Black Lives Matter

This year, movements have risen, people protested and governments listened. We find ourselves facing an unprecedented international crisis and once again fighting against racism and injustice across the world. Every year, October comes, and the celebration of Black History Month arrives.

Black Lives Matter, a slogan chanted by tens of thousands around the world. The movement has sparked hashtags, a network of grass-roots organisations and a moral collective of activists. Long before BLM, there had been acts of racism but the killing of George Floyd took the movement to areas it had not reached before.

Moving forward, the BLM movement is likely to inspire individuals and groups around the world to pursue their own calling, focussing on other examples of racism and injustice in our society. This

story still has a long way to run. Although our modern-day society is much more tolerant, multi-cultural and egalitarian than the past, there is always more we can do.

Though it is sad that we need to have this dedicated month to raise awareness – because of the lack of education about black history and racial equality – it also shows that the world is beginning to move forward on both of these fronts. We are making progress.

BY SHERYL EJIM, ADAM ELLIOTT
AND JACK MASTERS

Best things about The Academy at Shotton Hall

At the end of the autumn term, we have started to settle in properly after almost half a year away from school.

Here, our students share the best things about the Academy, which they've noticed since returning:

"The teachers are very kind, supportive and motivational. They will always help you and never fail to make their lessons interesting and entertaining!"

AMIEE COXON

"The pupils are the best because they are so nice and it is quite easy to make new friends. I already have two great best friends!"

ALISHA DALTON

"Food is one of, if not the best thing about the Academy. The range of hot meals (Sunday dinners, spaghetti bolognese, mince and dumplings, chicken tikka baguettes - I could go on) is second to none. You can even get bacon and sausage sandwiches at breaktime!"

OLLY ROBINSON

"The teachers are so kind and are always there to help. Teachers find plenty of ways to make learning fun."

JASMINE ROBINSON



MARCUS
RASHFORD

YOU ARE A
CHAMPION
UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL,
FIND YOUR VOICE AND
BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE

Marcus Rashford

Marcus Rashford MBE has become something of a hero this summer, campaigning for free school meals to be extended over school holidays and challenging the Government to do more for families affected by lockdown. Recently, he's shifted his focus to books, and he wants to get young people to start reading!

Septs were treated to a reading assembly from Miss Pounder which explained how Marcus' entire outlook on the world was altered when he began to read at age 17. We discussed his new book club and his aim for all children to have access to free reading material.

Here at the Academy, we are extremely lucky. Olly Robinson, a Year 8 student, explained that our library is one of the best things about the school: "We have an amazing library for everyone to visit with hundreds of things to read. It's book heaven!"

Marcus Rashford will publish his first book, entitled *YOU ARE A CHAMPION: Unlock Your Potential, Find Your Voice and Be the BEST You Can Be*, in 2021. Find out more at panmacmillan.com/blogs/books-for-children/marcus-rashford.



Creative Writing Success!

Congratulations to Year 8 student, Jasmine Robinson, whose poem about Anne Frank was recognised by the Anne Frank Trust. In a competition involving tens of thousands of students across the UK, Jasmine's poem was awarded a merit by a panel of judges including Booker Prize winner, Bernardine Evaristo. Well done Jasmine! Have a read of Jasmine's award-winning poem...

13 and imprisoned,
In the fear of Hitler.
A diary as a friend,
And family as protectors.
The secret is kept,
by some close neighbours,
the gestapos after her,
because of her religion.

Germany isn't safe,
Jews are the victims.
Men are sent away,
To fight Hitler,
whilst Jews are sent away,
And left there to die.
The gestapos after her,
Because of her religion.

She took a journey to
Amsterdam,
Running away from Nazis.
Miep gave her some food,
To keep her undercover.
She's hiding away,
No one can know.
The gestapos after her,
Because of her religion.
Jews are sent away,
To a place of torture.
Nothing to drink or eat,
Forced to work long hours,
One toilet for thousands,
Hitlers way of punishment.
The gestapos after her,
Because of her religion.

The gestapos in Amsterdam,
She has to run.
The USA Is next,
But Nazis have surrounded her.
Trapped in what was paradise,
But now her death bed.
The gestapos found her,
And tortured her because of
her religion.

She was sent to a camp in
Holland,
Not a one full of sun and fun,
But pain, torture,
And Jewish deaths.
She was starved and stripped
of her rights.
This was the end of an innocent
child.
She was now dead
Because of her religion.

The gestapos were stopped,
And Jews were set free.
Although she had died,
Her story lived on,
Through a simple birthday gift.
Her father survived and
published her diary,
Her grave was famous,
And a museum in her name
And she's remembered as Anne
Frank.



THE HUNGER GAMES

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2020

Black History

This month we have looked back, reflected on and remembered the incredible people who have stood up against inequality and adversity across the world.

Students at the Academy took part in a range of activities for Black History Month throughout October, including assemblies led by our student leaders. Deputy Head Boy, Ben Olver, who has a real passion for music, created a short homage to black music and the influence that it has had. Our Deputy Head Girl, Chloe Friberg, produced an assembly which commemorated those who have lost their lives due to American police brutality and shone a spotlight on black British historical figures such as the footballer, Walter Tull.

Here are some of the important people students have learned and thought about this month:

In 1955, a black woman called Rosa Parks said 'No.' She refused to move from her seat on a segregated bus and sparked a nationwide protest against racist policies and laws across America. With the assistance of famous activists such as Martin Luther King, the Montgomery Bus Boycott in Alabama was extremely successful. Eventually, bus companies began losing business and decided to abolish segregation on buses. This was a crucial step in the fight for civil rights during the 20th century.

An icon of black history, Martin Luther King was an inspirational speaker and civil rights activist who led the way for political and social change across America. Named after a religious icon from the 16th century, he is best known for his important speech: 'I Have a Dream.' Delivered in 1963, the speech envisions a land free of disadvantages and discrimination and still inspires those who fight for racial equality today.

A hero for black people across the world, Harriet Tubman was a former slave who escaped the manacles of enforced slavery and helped others to find freedom too. Whilst campaigning for the abolition of slavery was her main focus, Tubman was also a nurse, a Union spy and a women's suffrage supporter – in her busy life, she helped countless people in many different ways.

BY ALFIE WHEELER, SOPHIE COOK,
MATTY ARKWRIGHT AND TILLY KNOX

The Hunger Games

Book: The Hunger Games

Author: Suzanne Collins

Rating: 4.2/5

Lockdown has certainly created a bit of boredom for all of us, however, one brilliant thing to turn to is a good old book. I decided that I would revisit the classics, which in my opinion include books such as *Harry Potter* and *The Hunger Games*. The latter is a set of books which you can revisit as many times as you want, with so many unexpected twists and turns. The Hunger Games is a fabulous book which keeps you on the edge of the seat the entire read. With the release of a new book, *The Ballad of the Song Birds and Snakes*, what better thing is there to do than revisit the first three books in preparation?

BY RIHANNA EVANS



Science newsletter competition

Every half term, students receive the *New Developments in Science* newsletter. There is a competition each term, as well as opportunities to earn merits. If you can link something new you have learned in the newsletter to the content you are learning in your lessons, your teachers will reward your knowledge.

Alfie Paterson has won the first science newsletter competition with a fantastic poster about the vaquita, an endangered marine species. Well done Alfie!

Living in a virtual world

Even before lockdown, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok had started to take over all of our lives. However, since Covid-19 struck, the use of social platforms has increased and now many other apps are part of our daily lives.

Zoom, a video calling platform which allows people to communicate online with friends, is used by millions of people to keep in touch with loved ones. Many schools are using technology to mirror real school in the virtual world. At the Academy, we use Teams and Office 365 for homework and communicating with teachers about school work.

The world has become so reliant on virtual forums that many people struggle to remember what the world was like before the internet was so powerful! You could say we are now living in a virtual world.

BY CHARLOTTE WILKINSON



Year 7 make their voices heard

Year 7 have been learning to make their voices heard by sharing the issues which matter most to them, from banning homework to eliminating racism and inequality across the world.

Inspired by civil rights activists, Martin Luther King and Emmeline Pankhurst, and famous voices from history and literature like Anne Frank and Atticus Finch, students have been developing their powers of persuasion.

Some students have even created posters to illustrate their points of view – these works of art wouldn't be out of place at any protest!



Remembrance Day

Students and staff at the Academy came together on Wednesday 11 November to commemorate the service of those in the Armed Forces.

Miss Wearmouth led two virtual assemblies, explaining how she travelled to the Battlefields in Belgium. She was inspired, by a WWI memorial in Shotton Colliery, to search for graves of local war heroes. Furthermore, she found several other gravestones to share with students, adorned with a variety of religious and national symbols and flags.

Head Girl, Ellie Crawford, also led an assembly in which she discussed the significance of poppies and why we wear them in November. There were many interesting facts, for example, wearing a purple poppy commemorates the lives of animals lost during war.

At two minutes to 11, students and staff paused lessons and breaks to watch a video which reminded us of the sacrifice made by so many during WWI and all other conflicts before and since. At 11, the two minutes' silence commenced which ended by Mr Robson's performance of the Last Post.

Lest We Forget



FESTIVE BOREDOM BUSTERS

Lockdown crafts



With very limited places we can visit this festive season, we have prepared a selection of crafts for you to try to keep you entertained over the holidays!

Drawing – Drawing is very therapeutic and good for the mind. It's also very easy – you can let your imagination run wild and all you need is a pencil and paper!

Papier maché – There are plenty of YouTube tutorials which will help you to pass the time with this fantastic craft.

Journalling – Document your life in lockdown with creative handwriting, drawings and scrapbooking.

Sewing – Sewing is easier than you might think, and you can create amazing crafts in no time, although you may need an adult's help!

Potato stamping – Very simple and has very consistent results.

Cardboard house – Use your leftover cardboard and boxes to create a playhouse for a younger

sibling, or yourself...

Jewellery making – This is easier than you think: all you need is string, beads and a YouTube tutorial and you can have a lovely new bracelet!

Finger painting – You can finger paint at any age! All you need is paint and paper to let your creativity flow.

Sword fight – Sellotape and empty toilet rolls can be used to make a sword or weapon which you can use to play-fight. Make it as decorative as you like but don't break anything or hurt each other!

Lockdown ballgown – With a bin bag and some crafty accessories you can make a fashion show to remember!

BY AMILIA ATKINSON & KRISSEY HOWE



DIY Christmas

- Make your own Christmas crackers
- Papier maché baubles
- Create a tree topper from card
- Make a hot chocolate kit from sachets and marshmallows
- Make your own cards
- Make personalised presents, such as a scrapbook

BY MILLIE CLARK

Top 10 Christmas films

Ten cosy Christmas films to enjoy over this festive period – whether you're locked down or not!

1. Home Alone
2. Elf!
3. Christmas with the Kranks
4. Polar Express
5. The Grinch
6. National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation
7. Santa Clause
8. Princess Switch
9. Deck the Halls
10. Arthur Christmas

BY AVA ROBINSON

Quarantine entertainment

Whether it's reading a book or doing some exercise, here is a guide for some things you can do during isolation.

Bake! – From a cake to a delightful batch of cookies, do some baking and take your mind off things! Nothing is better than a plate of tantalising cupcakes.

Read a book – It may sound boring, but once you start you can't stop! Pick up a book and enjoy escaping to another world!

Exercise – You may not like it at first, but exercise is a good way to shape your body and get things off your mind.

Online games – From experience, it is hard to be separated from your friends and others, so talk online and maybe play some games together!

Make a bucket list – In quarantine, we have a lot of spare time on our hands, so make a bucket list!

BY LEAH EASTERBROOK



Ask the teachers!

After all of the chaos of lockdown, Covid-19 and the uncertainty surrounding Christmas, you may be wondering how you are going to make the festive period special during the pandemic. So, we decided to ask the teachers: 'How will you make your lockdown Christmas special this year?'

Here is what they had to say:

Miss Hook: A photo every day from everyone in the family.

Miss Siddie: Spoiling my dog, Elsie, on her first Christmas.

Miss Pounder: Zoom family Christmas dinner!

Mrs Primrose: We are making our own Christmas cards, to make a more personal connection with those people we can't be close to this year.

Miss Jamieson: We will make the house more Christmassy than ever and enjoy the big day in our pyjamas, eating chocolate and pizza, rather than sticking with our traditions of running around to see everyone and eating far too much turkey!

Mrs Stewart: Virtual family games.

Miss P Bradley: Having the time to enjoy all the Christmas traditions, like watching *It's a Wonderful Life* and making reindeer food.

Miss Wearmouth: This Christmas will be like no other and I intend to spend my time indulging in the German idea of 'Gemütlichkeit' with a dash of Danish 'hygge' thrown in. So, what does that entail, you ask?

It is active stillness, not laziness. It is recharging your batteries with reading, playing games (I am fiercely competitive), walking whilst being wrapped up, the smell of a real Christmas tree, the cold outside and warmth inside. It is cooking for pleasure, being cosy indoors and mindful outdoors. It is the idea of snow (dream on!) and watching the ice crystals form in all their beauty. It is calmness and recuperation from the madness of the year. Merry Christmas to all.



Shotton Hall



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 2021?

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 2021 with bursaries of up to £26k available for certain subjects as well as student finance for eligible trainees.

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