



Head's Newsletter

December 2015

'A Culture of Excellence'



Dear Parents and Students,

As the end of the Autumn term approaches, this is the time when all schools begin to receive data from the Government about their GCSE and A-level results from the previous Summer. This data analyses in great detail the attainment and progress of Tadcaster Grammar School students compared to all students nationally. It is an incredibly important point in the year for us as it allows staff and governors to really interrogate all aspects of the school's overall examination performance and to evaluate strengths and areas for improvement.

I would like to share just some of the headlines from 2015 with you:

- Progress of TGS students at A-level overall was significantly above the national average
- Progress of TGS students at GCSE overall (the new progress 8 measure) was significantly above the national average
- Attainment of TGS students at GCSE overall (5A*-C including English and Maths) was significantly above the national average
- Progress of TGS students at GCSE in Mathematics has been significantly above the national average for each of the last three years
- Progress of TGS students at GCSE in English and Science has been significantly above the national average for two of the last three years
- School attendance of TGS students was above the national average

As you can imagine this was wonderful news and we were very pleased to receive it as an early Christmas present! I am delighted for our students and staff and so proud of their considerable efforts.

Schools though, are so much more than examination results. In our 'Culture of Excellence' we aim to develop the whole person and provide opportunities for everyone to flourish and grow as young adults. I think that this is reflected by the staggering range of things that have been taking place in the school this term and are recorded in this Newsletter.....

Have a great Christmas and a very Happy New Year,

Martyn Sibley



CALCARIA HOUSE NEWS



Last time I wrote to you, we were looking forward to a well-deserved summer break - and here we are a week before Christmas and preparing to jump into 2016!!!

How time flies!

As the 2015 summer term drew to a close we enjoyed a fabulous evening of celebration and awaited the results of the Year 11 and 13 examinations. I am glad to say that I was able to share in many happy moments and saw the Year 13 students heading off to a multitude of Universities and post A level adventures. I was also very lucky to be part of the GCSE success which saw the students able to follow their Post-16 path - I was delighted to see so many returning to us at TGS.

On another note, my House Leader's student award from the celebration evening went to Oliver Kitchingman, who has subsequently been invited to represent Team GB in the Youth Olympic Games in Rio during summer 2016 - a massive congratulations from us all!! While he is there he will also be spending some time doing some work with disadvantaged children.

This year has been very busy, from the marble challenge, coffee mornings, Anti-Bullying week, Children In Distress shoe box appeal to the Paris paper chain; however, my most challenging task was to appoint my two new House Captains from a field of seven brilliant Year 12 students - they were all fabulous!

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Calcaria's House Captains for 2015/16 **Aron Clark and Hattie Barton (pictured right)**

"Hi there, I am Aron one of the new House Captains and I am 16 years of age. My focus this year will be to involve the parents a lot more, within the House. As a strong, confident person, I have no problem with taking any thoughts or criticisms that you may have to improve the school/House. In fact, please get in touch as I am halfway through a newsletter that I am writing and any stories will be very welcome. Otherwise, I enjoy competition whether that be physical or academically and myself and Hattie are here to support and mentor the House, and of course be the best!"

"Hello my name is Hattie - I have just been selected to be the new House Captain for Calcaria, alongside Aron for this year. I have been at Tadcaster Grammar since Year 7 and now currently in Year 12 studying A-levels in Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Economics; with the hope of securing a place at university to study Medicine. I am really excited to be working with Mr Punt, Mrs Lindsey and Aron to try and make a positive contribution to Calcaria. So far we have helped to organise, with Mrs Lindsay, 'Calcaria Coffee Mornings' held in form time, to boost our sense of identity within the House. I look forward to working together with everyone in the House in the forthcoming year. If you have any ideas or questions please do not hesitate to come and ask either me or Aron and we will be delighted to help!"



**I am looking forward to a fantastic 2016 and would like to wish you all a
Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year!!
Mr A Punt—House Leader Calcaria**



DAWSON HOUSE NEWS

First of all, I would like to introduce the new student leadership team for Dawson House.

I am very pleased to announce that this year's Dawson House Captains are **Austin Clavane and Emma Heron (pictured below)**. Both students were outstanding in their interviews. Both have developed a Dawson action plan which will, without doubt, result in loads of fun for our great House. As Captains they will be helped by their Vice Captains: Jessica MacLean and Lauren Andrew. All four students are outstanding role models for our wonderful school and House. I do urge you to speak to them with any ideas or concerns about school.



A Message from our House Captains:

"Emma and I are very honoured to be Dawson's new House Captains. We have always been active in our school community. However, our new position allows us to take a more leading and creative role in terms of school activities. We are also passionate about bridging the gap between the students and teachers by being popular representatives of the students of Dawson House. Emma is particularly keen to set up an effective mentoring programme for those students in need of extra motivation and led by students wanting to help others in becoming effective learners. The study of politics and issues affecting us on a global and local level has always been a passion of mine and that is why I am setting up a Politics Society for our House. Politically enthusiastic students will be given topics to research and then present to their forms in order to spark healthy discussions. We hope that we represent you personally and as a student body successfully over the course of the year, providing you with support and activities which will enable you to become better social and academic learners."



Helping the House Captains and Vice Captains is a team of House ambassadors, who in the future (with a bit of luck) will be our new House Captains in years to come. This year's Dawson Ambassadors are: Bradley Benson, Rebecca Heron, Charlotte McAvoyn and Katherine Anderson. They will be working closely with the Dawson form reps.

I think you will agree with me that is a rather formidable team!

So far this year we have already had great success. The Year 7 students dominated the House cross country. Mr Solk, Head of the PE Faculty, commented it was one of the best displays of cross country running he had seen in his entire teaching career. The whole House is very proud of them.

As always, I would like to thank our fantastic Dawson tutor team. As a team they consistently put the needs of the students first and regularly go that 'extra mile'. I would also like to thank Mrs Randall for again supporting me throughout the year with the running of Dawson House.

To conclude, I would like to confirm that I will be leaving at the end of the Autumn term to become the Director of Sport at Rossett School in Harrogate. The decision to take the role was one of the hardest decisions of my professional career. Getting to know all the students and parents at TGS has, without doubt, been the highlight of my career so far.

I would like to leave you with this thought: There are many things we can't do YET - stick with it, put the hours in, put the effort in, and you can achieve anything. Tadcaster Grammar School is an amazing place, full of amazing people, who will make things happen for you, if you want them to.

Farewell - and all the very best for whatever you choose to do with your lives.

Mr R Bradshaw—House Leader Dawson



FAIRFAX HOUSE NEWS



Welcome to our new Fairfax House Captains—Zoe MacNaughton and Joe Stables

During this half term, our new House Captains have been appointed—Zoe MacNaughton and Joe Stables. Joe and Zoe have a lot of ideas to support our students and are also looking at the wider world to support those in need. They are asking students for their ideas to improve Fairfax House and the school.

“As House Captains this year, we aim to help Fairfax and Tadcaster Grammar School become a bigger part of not only our local, but our global community,” said Zoe. “We aim to keep our school up to date with current issues such as the refugee crisis and current political situations not only in our country, but across the world,” added Joe. “We also hope to increase support given to students in our House, hoping to set up a mentoring system for either educational or general advice. We are here to support our House and hope that we can do so to our full potential.”

Although we have moved down to second in the House Points chart we are still doing well and students have responded to collecting as many as they can, both individually and through competitions. Many students have gained House Points for their excellent awards. On Monday, I held the last assembly of the term and have asked Fairfax students to reflect that in general, and more specifically at Christmas, that they are more fortunate than many other people. I have asked them to reflect on how their Christmas will compare to others, in particular refugees who are out in the cold.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

Mrs N Weatherill—House Leader Fairfax



OGLETHORPE HOUSE NEWS



I would like to begin with an enormous 'Thank You' to all the Oglethorpe students who have made my first term at Tadcaster Grammar School so wonderful. You have made me feel so welcome and I feel truly honoured to be working with you all. Thank you also to all the Oglethorpe Tutors who have been incredibly kind and helpful; you do an amazing job making sure that Oglethorpe students are supported and fulfilling their potential. A special thanks to Miss Byers our Lead Tutor, who has been fantastic in helping run Oglethorpe House!

It has been an incredibly busy term with many fundraising events for causes including Walking With the Wounded, the Poppy Appeal, the Children In Distress Shoebox Appeal, Anti-Bullying Week and Shelter. I have learnt that Oglethorpe has some of the most generous students in the school, with many of our students organising and being involved in fundraising and campaigning.

We have also spent a lot of VT time learning about important events and issues including International Peace Day, Black History Month, Armistice Day, World AIDS Day and Human Rights Day. We were particularly shocked by the recent Paris attacks and took part in a project to make a paper chain of messages showing peace and solidarity. I am proud that Oglethorpe students have shown maturity and consideration of others during VT activities.

Finally I would like to introduce our two new Oglethorpe House Captains: Tom Woffendin and Elspeth Anderson; and our two Vice Captains Beth Wilson and Emily Tranter. The team have so many amazing ideas and plans for the year ahead to make sure that Oglethorpe students really get the most out of life at TGS. Here's what they have to say:

"Hello, my name is Tom Woffendin; I am honoured to be one of the new Oglethorpe House Captains and I am excited to make a difference within the school. I aim to unite the House even further, through introducing form mentoring and team work activities. If you have any questions/ideas you wish to share with me, please contact me at 10woffendint@tgsch.uk."

"Hi, I am Elspeth Anderson from O3. I am excited to be one of the Oglethorpe House Captains this year and cannot wait to start all our ideas in the New Year. I am especially looking forward to planning House events that we haven't seen run before, and welcoming suggestions from Oglethorpe students. I look forward to meeting the Form Reps in the New Year!"



Left to right: Emily, Beth, Tom and Elspeth

"Hello, I am Beth Wilson and I am thrilled to have been selected as Oglethorpe's Vice House Captain. My focus is on mentoring, allowing older students to pass on knowledge and experience gained within their time at school to benefit younger students. This will be a great opportunity to bridge the age gap between older and younger year groups within VT."

"Hello! I am Emily Tranter and I am one of the new Vice House Captains for Oglethorpe. I am incredibly excited about promoting our House and I am eager to establish an Oglethorpe 'Achievement Board' of all our achievements for everyone to see! I am also passionate about charity fundraising and plan to run a variety of fun events to get everyone involved.. As you can see, it is an exciting time to be in Oglethorpe House!

Well Done for a fantastic term and start to the year.

Merry Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all in January for an even better year ahead!

Miss P McKenzie—House Leader Oglethorpe



TOULSTON HOUSE NEWS



What a fantastic start to the year. I would like to say a huge thank-you to all students and staff for a very warm welcome into the role as Toulston House Leader. This term has truly made me proud to be working with such a great community of young people who strive to do their very best.

It has been a busy start to the year with lots of fundraising events supporting Walking With the Wounded, the Poppy Appeal, the Shoebox Appeal, Anti-Bullying and Shelter. I would like to thank Jess Whyte (Year 8), in particular, for her fundraising efforts for the Prince's Trust.

In the first few weeks we had the marble challenge, which involved all forms creating a plan of how 23 students could produce a streamline track for a marble to run through at pace. They were then awarded for their decoration skills. The quickest and the most decorative award went to Miss Laidlaw's Form T3, who showed teamwork and creativity! Well done. Thank-you to all the Tutor groups for showing great collaboration and community spirit.

Just before October half term, I was lucky enough to hold interviews with 10 Year 12 candidates for the House Captain role; each showed maturity in their commitment to the Toulston population. The decision for Mr Wren and I was one of much deliberation, as the standard of applicants was extraordinary. The process involved letters of application, interviews and references, all of which were exemplary. I would like to introduce the successful students who are the new Toulston House Captains and they are pictured above— **Ben Amies-King, Lucy Chapman and Rob Cornforth** who have 'high aspirations for Toulston House and high expectations as to what we can achieve as a community'. We look forward to your support and input.



I would also like to thank and welcome the following Year 12 students as Vice Captains in a number of specialised roles, such as Monitoring, Year 7 Ambassadors and event organisers: Tamsyn Dawson, Holly Dawkes, Rob Dunham, Emily Grimes, Ellie Heard, Callum Mo and Lily Walker.

The last half term has shown our Year 7 students settling down and becoming fully fledged Tadcaster Grammar students. They have shown great promise in terms of Vertical Tutoring and likewise across the board in their subject areas. I feel proud to have been given such enthusiastic students into the Toulston House community.

I would like to thank our fantastic Toulston Tutor team. As a team of tutors they consistently put the needs of the students first and regularly go above and beyond. I would also like to thank Mr Wren specifically for all his support with the running of Toulston House and like to welcome Miss Cantrell in her role as Lead Tutor; I feel very privileged to have a team that is genuinely dedicated to the needs of the students within the House.

I have been impressed with the way the students have embraced change and supported each other this term. I am very grateful to have been provided with the opportunity to get to know even more of you better and look forward to continuing this brilliant start next year.

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I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and I wish you success for 2016.

Miss C Taylor—House Leader Toulston



WHARFE HOUSE NEWS

In my first term as House Leader of Wharfe, I have been very impressed and grateful for all the students' efforts and support. Throughout this term, I have tried to get to know as many of the students in the House and have been amazed at their dedication to school and all House events.



In the first few weeks, we had the marble challenge which culminated in a roll-off during one VT session. Blessed with good weather, we all congregated on the tennis courts and timed how quickly the Form could get the marble to roll down 25 toilet tubes. The winners were Mr Smart's VT group with an impressive time under five seconds!! This showed the importance of group activities to raise community spirit and engagement..

Just before October half term, I was lucky enough to hold interviews for any Wharfe Y12 students who were interested in being a Wharfe House Captain. The process involved letters of application, interviews and references. The field was very strong, but with the assistance of Jessica Render and Emily Baylis (Y13 House Captains), I was delighted to appoint:



Eleanor Dodd, Rachel Kenyon and Cabhan Conway (pictured above) as the House Captains for this year.

They have already organised a Year 7 activity session and regularly meet with me to discuss how we can improve several areas within the House structure.

The Year 7 students have done very well in settling into school and some may say that they have done so with less fuss than I have! They are a credit to the House already and have shown immense promise in helping us push for the school trophy at the end of the year.

Finally, I would like to thank all the form tutors in Wharfe and wish them my heartfelt thanks for all their efforts this term. My role has been made much more effective with their support. A special mention must go to Miss Thomas and Mrs Harrison for their guidance and efforts over the past term.

I would like to wish all the students, tutors and families the very best for this Christmas

and a Successful and Happy 2016

Mr P Betts—House Leader Wharfe



Sixth Form News

Breast Cancer Awareness Day—Wear It Pink

Sixth Form students dressed in pink, painted their faces and held a cake stall to raise awareness and money for the fight against Breast Cancer. They raised the magnificent sum of £360 .

Nancy Budler, Head of Sixth Form said: "So many lives have been touched by breast cancer and we all thought it was a good cause." Getting involved in Wear It Pink Day was one of the first decisions of the new Sixth Form Committee.

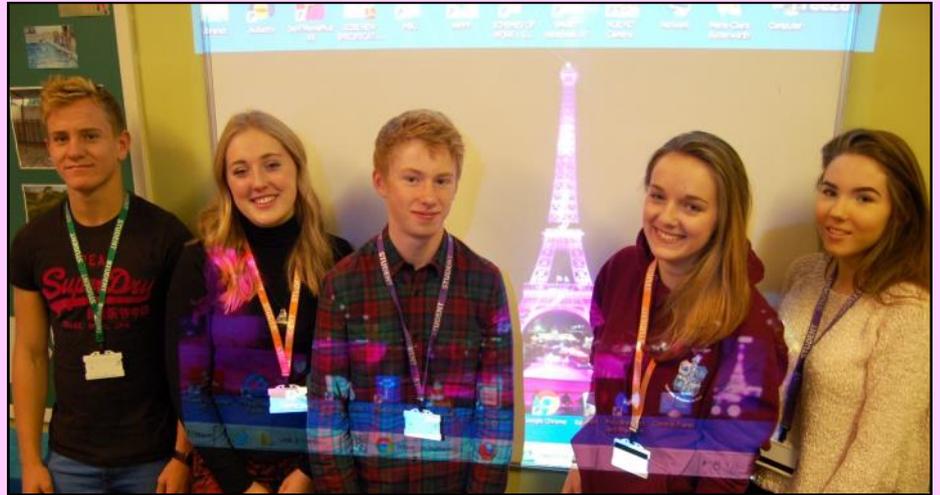




More Sixth Form News

Pink Paris—Octobre Rose

Continuing our support for Breast Cancer Awareness—Wear Pink Day, AS Level French students paused their study of French music to support "Octobre Rose" in front of the Eiffel Tower, which was especially lit up in pink for the occasion.



Committed to the Sixth Form

A new Sixth Form Committee has been established to enable "Sixth Form students to play an increasingly significant role within the school," said Head Boy Greg Brewster.

"The formation of this Committee should now give Sixth Form students a voice to be heard, an opportunity to express their opinions within the School community, more responsibility and a platform to make a difference," he added. Greg and Head Girl Jess Render were shocked at the amount of applicants for the new Committee who showed their willingness to get involved and dedicate their free time to their Sixth Form community. "Many break-times were spent organising S1 for Pink Day, where we raised a significant amount for breast cancer and plans for the future include reorganising the Common Room."

"Most importantly, I want to mention the significant impact Ms Budler, our new Head of Sixth Form, has had on the Sixth Form as a whole. The idea for the Committee and future plans for repair and refurbishment of our Sixth Form environment is all thanks to her," stressed Greg. "Juggling a variety of everyday tasks from university applications to lack of lanyards, Ms Budler has managed to maintain her positive outlook for the future of the Sixth Form. Both Jess and I know that with a leader like Ms Budler, some exciting and welcome changes are soon to happen at Tadcaster Grammar School Sixth Form.





Tadcaster is a Finalist in the Prestigious Rolls-Royce Science Prize

Tadcaster Grammar School has been selected as one of the finalists in The Rolls-Royce Science Prize 2015-2016.

Matt Raywood, Integrated Project Team Leader for Rolls-Royce plc came into school for a day to work with Sixth Form Maths students as they prepare for this prestigious prize event, which will run throughout the whole academic year.

The School has been awarded £6,000 to support the development of the project and the winners will be announced during a prize ceremony in November 2016.

Rani Gill, Rolls-Royce Project Manager, Science Prize said: "Rolls-Royce has long advocated science teaching in schools. For more than 10 years the Rolls-Royce Science Prize has encouraged teachers to improve science and, more recently, maths teaching and inspire children with exciting, intellectually stimulating and relevant education. Tadcaster Grammar School has risen to the challenge and has put forward an excellent proposal. I wish them the very best in the competition."

Gravity exercises and recording bounce height with Matt Raywood, Integrated Project Team Leader for Rolls-Royce (fourth from left), Gareth Dale, Key Stage 5 Leader for Mathematics at TGS (fourth from the right) and Sixth Form students involved in the prestigious Rolls-Royce Science Prize final for 2015-2016



An Excerpt from the TGS/Rolls-Royce blog: It's been a busy month since it was announced that Tadcaster Grammar School has gained a place in the Rolls-Royce Science Prize finals. Everyone has been so excited in the Maths Faculty, especially Gareth Dale; the super-enthusiastic project leader. Ideas around 'Science related Maths' (or 'Maths related Science', depending on our leaning) have been bouncing back and forth and have begun to excite the students in the Key Stage 5 Core Maths classes. Our intention is to deliver key elements of the Core Maths curriculum through hands-on, project based, rich activity with a heavy bias to the world of Science.

It was feet-on-the-ground time in late October for the visit of our Rolls-Royce mentor, Matt Raywood. Matt met with the enigmatic Gareth about the finer details of the project, the exuberant Science teacher Samson Sharratt about exciting Science ideas and visionary Andrew Sykes, Maths teacher and one of our Assistant Headteachers, to find out a bit more about the school. Wanting to showcase the principles of our project, Rob Power, Associate Assistant Headteacher and Head of Faculty for Mathematics, invited Matt into his Core Maths lesson that day. At the heart of the lesson was repeated percentage calculation, graphical techniques and exponential decay, all leading to geometric series and a sum to infinity as the ultimate challenge for the students! All of the Maths involved was pinned to bouncing different types of balls falling due to gravity and recording bounce height. The students thoroughly enjoyed the work they did and didn't even realise at times the level of Maths they achieved.



European Restart A Heart Day

Twenty thousand children from 88 secondary schools across the County and more than 400 volunteers took part in European Restart a Heart Day on Friday 16 October.

Benefitting from the information given on a video and then hands-on training, provided by six voluntary first responders and Dr Hazel Talbot from Embrace (Sheffield-based Infant & Children's transport service) were students from Tadcaster Grammar School.

"The students at Tadcaster Grammar School were a credit to the school and themselves as they really got involved in the session, asking a lot of important questions and genuinely wanting to learn," said Julian Hall, Tadcaster Community responder. "It was great to see the young people enjoying learning to save a life," added Dr Talbot.



Julian Hall (back left) and community first responders pictured with Tadcaster Grammar School students



More than £30,000 people suffer cardiac arrests outside of hospital in the UK every year. If this happens in front of a bystander who starts CPR immediately before the arrival of the ambulance, the patient's chances of survival double.

European Restart a Heart Day is sponsored by the Yorkshire Ambulance Service Charitable Fund and has the backing of Leeds United FC, Yorkshire Carnegie, Leeds Rhinos, Bradford City FC Community Foundation and Yorkshire chef James Martin.



Remembering the Fallen on Armistice Day

Two Minutes' Silence and The Last Post

Tadcaster Grammar School remembered the fallen, holding an outdoor Service with a two-minute silence.

Students representing each Tutor group gathered, as Headteacher Martyn Sibley read a poignant letter written by a soldier to his Mother in his dying moments.



The Head Boy and Head Girl, Greg Brewster and Jess Render, read poems and the Last Post was played by Year 10 student Matthew Foulds.





Staff and Students Show Solidarité

Staff and students at Tadcaster Grammar School came together to show their support for the citizens of Paris, following the recent acts of terrorism there.

A one-minute silence was held as a mark of respect and students also made paper chains out of blue, white and red card, writing messages of sympathy, hope, love and peace on each link. These are now hanging in the foyer.

A non-uniform day held as part of Anti-Bullying Week, where students dressed in blue, was made even more poignant at the suggestion of one student who asked that all wear blue, white and red clothing instead of just blue, in the hope of stamping out not just bullying, but terrorism and all other acts of anti-social behaviour against each other. The non-uniform day raised the magnificent sum of £942.94 for the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

Marie-Claire Butterworth, a French teacher at Tadcaster Grammar School was also shown support by her fellow language teachers as they lit a candle in remembrance of those who had lost their lives.

"As a French citizen, the events of Friday 13 November filled me with immense sorrow," said Madame Butterworth. "Watching my native country being torn apart by such a horrific act of terrorism was deeply upsetting for me, my family and my friends who



live in France. What I did not expect is the solidarité England has shown and more specifically the kindness of staff and students at Tadcaster Grammar School," she exclaimed. "A special Vertical Tutoring session was organised to explain to the students the tragic events and a minute's silence was held. Later that day, I sat down at a desk and read the messages of peace written by the students. This filled me with hope for a better future where we can all live together in a spirit of fraternité," she added.

"I know that France, like me, appreciate all your support and for that, I would just like to say 'Merci pour tout!'"





Megan Says 'No' To Bullying With Her 'Mean' Version of Taylor's Swift's Song

By Mrs Egan—Student Development Team Link

Compliments galore have been received from students, staff and visitors for Megan Day's brilliant contribution to our House Anti-Bullying Assemblies. To reinforce our School's message that 'It Is Time To Say No!' to bullying behaviour, Megan performed Taylor Swift's inspirational song 'Mean'. This was written about Taylor Swift's personal experiences of bullying behaviour and how she has overcome them to have a very successful life. Megan's six performances were outstanding with rapturous applause following each one.

Representatives from our fantastic peer supporters, the ABA's, were also very happy to positively contribute to all House assemblies to reassure our students that they will Always Be Around to offer support. Students have commented that it is great to have someone other than members of staff who they can talk to.

As ever, it was an absolute pleasure to see such enthusiasm in making our Anti-Bullying Week assemblies a huge success.

Well done to everyone!





Reading In The Extreme

Now this is what you call 'Extreme Reading'!

Imagine reading a book whilst scuba diving, cartwheeling round the garden, or dropping everything in the middle of an important task just to pick up the Kindle. Well students at Tadcaster Grammar School have been encouraged to do just that and it doesn't end there.

The Literacy team at the School are really pushing the boundaries and reaching out to every student to make the subject interesting, even if on occasions it seems diverse in the extreme.



Underwater Reading—Dane Emmott scuba diving in Crete

However, Literacy Leaders Adam Dawson, Joanne Alderson and Melanie Carroll are seeing the results as they get the message out there that Literacy can be fun. They have introduced a number of exciting programmes which they have rolled out across all year groups and it really is working. Apart from Extreme Reading challenges, programmes include DEAR time (Drop Everything And Read), Fortnightly Favourite Words, a Spelling Bee competition, World Book Day celebrations, Accelerated Reading in Year 8 and 9, Reading Leaders in Year 12 supporting weaker readers, Literacy Detective videos to help with common grammar mistakes and the promotion of a love of reading in the school. Year 6 students were set the Summer Reading Challenge of reading six books over the six week holiday period prior to starting at TGS. They were given early access to our School library and allowed to take out up to six books. A total of 143 students completed the challenge: 837 books were read over six weeks!

"Okay, it may be gimmicky, but it is great to see students thinking about reading on holiday and in their spare time and making it a fun part of their day," said Mr Dawson. "What we are trying to do is blow away the cobwebs where reading is concerned and breathe some life into reading new things and discovering whole new worlds through someone else's perspective," he added. "It is often a brave thing to turn away from all of the distractions of modern life and immerse oneself in a good book, but for those who do the rewards can be life changing!"

The Spelling Bee has now become an annual event and very popular, – enhanced by a visit to the Harry Potter Studios for the winners. Students have embraced the challenge of spelling as their testimonials prove.

"I entered the Spelling Bee because I know that it is something I am relatively good at and the prize was a big incentive!" said Year 11 student Lucy Roebuck. "I truly hope that the Spelling Bee continues as it is a great opportunity for those who enjoy



English and would like to visit the Harry Potter studios. An amazing experience," she exclaimed.

Fellow Year 11 student Poppy Askew would ultimately like to be a novelist one day, so for her entering the Spelling Bee was a no brainer. "I enjoy spelling and reading and I want to write books one day," she said. "I really liked the prize too because Harry Potter movies are my childhood," she added

So what next for the Literacy team as they keep the momentum going—watch this space!

Cartwheel—Eleanor Wilson reads her book in the garden at home



Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition in Nidderdale

By Danyal, Josh, Jake, Dom and Elliott (pictured right)

What We Wanted to Achieve

We set out on our expedition hoping to expand our knowledge of the outdoors and safety, whilst enjoying the countryside. We wanted to develop our skills of map reading and teamwork and succeeded, especially when we got lost on the first day and found our way back, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience!

At The Campsite

At the campsite we had fun, as well as cooking a good tea and being organised to leave at 8:10 in the morning. We enjoyed the campsite because we played catch and talked with friends.

Overview

Basically the weekend in Nidderdale was a good one. We all enjoyed ourselves and stayed safe. In our opinion we gained vital lifeskills during the expedition. We can't wait for Silver!



Romie, Sam, Dan, Alex, Mark and Robert (left) are pictured on their Duke of Edinburgh Expedition, also to Nidderdale, from Ripley Castle to Dacre. Their presentation aims were to take photographs of interesting things, livestock and with people who they met along the way.

Duke of Edinburgh Gold

Daniel Buckley and Alistair Souch are pictured right at St James's Palace when they received their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.

David Aspinall, the TGS co-ordinator for Duke of Edinburgh has already received an invitation to attend St James's Palace on 15 March 2016, when six of our students will be presented with their awards.

If you would like more information about the Duke of Edinburgh, please contact Mr Aspinall at d.aspinall@tgsch.uk





Sport News

York Schools Cross Country Results

There were some excellent performances by Tadcaster Grammar School students at the above event held on the 19 November:

Stella Cross (Year 11) won the Inter Girls race and will now represent Area.

James Tucker (Year 11) was second in the Inter Boys race and will also represent the Area.

Year 7 Girls came second as a team (out of 12) with Chloe Hall 9th, Jess Flint 15th and Katie Harford-Cross 16th. There were 117 runners in this race and all three girls were given letters to represent the Area.

Ryan Ford (Year 7) was 11th out of 94 runners and again given a letter to represent the Area.

Reiley Newiss (Year 8) was 19th in the Junior Boys race with 94 runners and involved Year 8 and 9 Boys. Again asked to represent the Area.

Dan Hartley (Year 10) was 17th in the Inter Boys race which involved Years 10 and 11.



Swimming

Year 10 student Tom Carswell has achieved a National Swimming time for backstroke 27.41 for 50 meters and a gold medal for fly for North Eastern Regionals.

Cricket

The Y8 boys are currently competing in the Yorkshire Schools' Indoor Cricket competition. In their most recent game they beat York High and Sherburn. The Sherburn game was a 'real thriller'. TGS scored 70 from their 8 overs and Sherburn scored 79!

As always - the boys were a credit to the school.





Lily is a Talented Aquatics Coach

Year 12 Tadcaster Grammar School student and Harrogate District Swimming Club athlete, Lily Walker, has been selected, in her role as a young coach, to attend the Youth Sport Trust National Talent Camp 2015.

The National Talent Camp is a unique residential experience which brings together 350 of the most talented young athletes, coaches and officials from different sports across England. Lily is one of 20 young Aquatics coaches from across the country selected by the Amateur Swimming Association. The Camp forms the first part of a 12 month development programme, which aims to develop coaching and leadership skills.

Lily said: "I am delighted that I have been selected. I have coached alongside my own training for the past two years. I really enjoy helping younger swimmers to develop their skills and techniques and their own love of swimming. I am hoping this opportunity will allow me to develop further and give something back to my sport.

I am grateful to my coaches at Harrogate, who supported my application and who will be mentoring me, and to the team at Tadcaster Community Swimming Pool for giving me valuable experience."



Year 11 Rugby Boys Reach Quarter-Finals of Yorkshire Cup

The Year 11 Rugby team rampaged into the quarter finals of the Yorkshire Cup, beating Kings School, Pontefract by 30 points to 29. An epic encounter where all players were a true credit to TGS. Well done boys!





The Engineering Extravaganza

By Mr Clarke—Teacher of Technology

A team of 12 Year 9 students took part in The Engineering Extravaganza, an exciting new event organised by the Institute of Engineers and held recently at the National Railway Museum. The students worked in teams of four on four different activities: constructing towers; 'Bloodhound' jet cars; air powered trains and a lecture on the materials used by engineers.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and came away with bags full of engineering related goodies.



Natalya Treads The Boards in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

Natalya Aspinall (Year 7 - T8KHA) is currently appearing at the West Yorkshire Playhouse in one of the world's favourite musicals, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

Having broken all box office records in the West End, this fun-filled production from the team that brought you Fiddler on the Roof and The King and I, promises laughs, magic galore and favourite songs including Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Hushabye Mountain and Truly Scrumptious – and Chitty herself!

This isn't Tally's first Christmas on stage having performed in Oliver! (2012) and Scrooge (2013) at the Leeds Grand Theatre.



Natalya treads the boards in Chitty—Photo by Alastair Muir

Tickets are still available for performances through to 31 January.

Don't Miss It!

Guitar Performance Wins Euan a Masterclass with Renowned Classical Guitarist

Euan Inglis, a Year 11 student and talented musician entered the 15 and under age group at the York Guitar Festival, which was held recently at Bootham School and



won! His prize was a Masterclass with Craig Ogden, the renowned Australian classical guitarist, whose albums have topped the UK classical charts. Euan played his performance piece again at a concert on the following Sunday evening.

Since that success, Euan has taken his Grade 7 Guitar exam (Trinity College) and achieved a high Distinction, including full marks for one of his pieces.

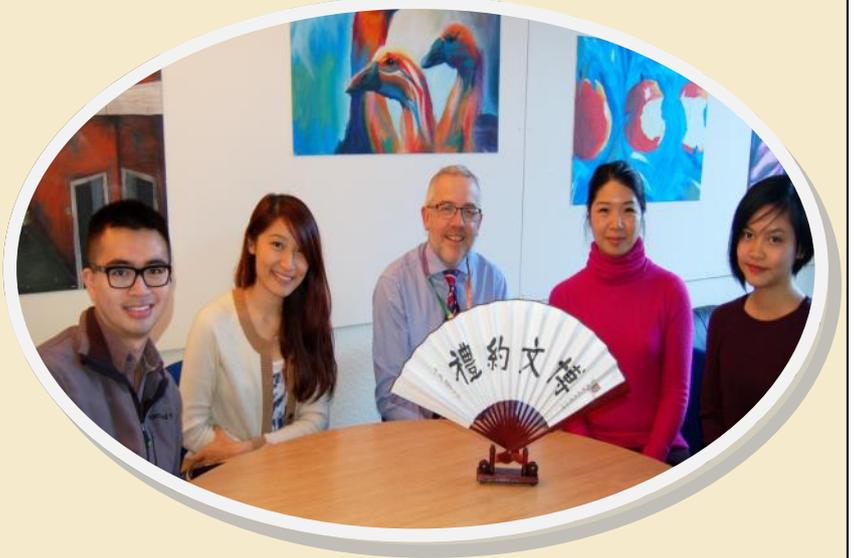
Many congratulations to Euan who is pictured above (far left) at the masterclass with Craig Ogden.



Training the Next Generation of Teachers **By Mr Wren, Assistant Headteacher** **(Teacher Development)**

Hardly a week goes by without another report in the press about the “teacher recruitment crisis”, so it is vital that schools play an active part in developing the next generation of excellent teachers.

The Autumn term has seen Tadcaster hosting trainee Maths and MFL teachers on the York PGCE programme. They have been observing lessons and working with experienced colleagues to deliver what hopefully are the first of many lessons for them in a long and rewarding career.



The reach of the good work of TGS staff sees us developing teachers, not only from the immediate locality, but internationally. Through partnership with the Norwegian Study centre at York University we hosted eight trainee English teachers during the Autumn term.

Beyond the European shores, we continue our work in developing teachers of English in Hong Kong. At a time where the Government is doing much to encourage schools to look at areas of China to see how they teach, it is rewarding to know that China is encouraging their teachers to learn from us too! In partnership with the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Global Studies Centre at York University, we hosted a group of four trainee teachers over a six-week period.

Thank you from Hong Kong (A Message from our Chinese Visitors)

Thank you to the teaching team at Tadcaster Grammar School and all the students we have met.

Thank you for welcoming us to your school over the past five weeks and giving us the opportunity to sit in your lessons. It has been really insightful to observe British culture and schooling and to meet your dedicated teachers and students.

We were truly amazed by the individuality and professionalism demonstrated by your teachers and students. We had an enjoyable time sharing our experiences with the Sixth Form students and hope that they could benefit from our sharing and found it useful and informative. Students at Tadcaster are very bright, helpful and a pleasure to talk to.

It has been a memorable five weeks. Particular thanks to Steve Wren who spent so much of his valuable time with us. Your anecdotes and insights have inspired us to pursue our dream of becoming effective teachers and put us on the right path. We look forward to keeping in touch with you and keeping you updated on our development as teachers. We wish all the teachers and students at Tadcaster a fruitful academic year and all the best in your future endeavours.

All the best—Joyce, Kevin, Lynette and Tiffany

Students from Norway studying at the University of York (pictured right)





Chef Shares Culinary Knowledge

By Mrs Gibson—Teacher of Catering

Year 11 GCSE Catering students again welcomed Andrew Wood, Food Development Manager at the University of York to school in December. Andrew ran a four hour practical workshop, culminating in each student preparing a three-course meal, which comprised of Baked Brie with Confit Beetroot, Poached Breast of Chicken with Spinach, Cumbrian Ham, Fondant Potato and Celeriac Puree and Chocolate Mousse in a Tuille Basket.

As well as passing on his practical food knowledge, Andrew gave an insight into the catering industry and his role at the University.

The students enjoyed their afternoon and gained valuable practical skills and subject knowledge. Our thanks must also go to the Yorkshire Agricultural Society who sponsor the workshop, paying for both Andrew's time and all the ingredients the students require, from their educational grant programme.



**Chef Workshop,
Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

**Baked Brie with Confit
Beetroot**

**Poached Breast of Chicken
with Spinach, Cumbrian Ham,
Fondant Potato and Celeriac
Puree**

**Chocolate Mousse in a Tuille
Basket**





Operation Wallacea

By Miss Harrison— Administrative Assistant for Partnership Development

Here at Partnership we are extremely proud to be supporting a fantastic venture taking place next Summer.

For two weeks in July, eight of our Year 11 and Year 12 students will be travelling to Indonesia, in order to take part in a global research and conservation project known as Operation Wallacea.

Throughout this Autumn term these students have organised a wide range of fundraising events, from cake sales, a raffle at the Tadcaster Christmas Market to a mock horse race in a local village!

To date, a whopping £1408.44 has been raised, with many more events lined up for next term. Please support further events to help these students raise the funds they need to go on Operation Wallacea.

The next fundraising venture is MarioKart Mayhem. All welcome, including members of staff. Prizes to be won up to £30! Show off your skills and beat your friends to become the ultimate TGS Racing Champion. Sign up at Rose Cottage (£3 entry).

For further information regarding Operation Wallacea, or any of the forthcoming fundraising events, please see the School website, contact me at Rose Cottage on 01937 837614 or email partnership@tgsch.uk

Fundraising for Operation Wallacea at the Tadcaster Christmas Market (right).

Pictured with Councillor Richard Sweeting, who is the current Chairman of Selby District Council



Raising funds and awareness for Operation Wallacea with a cake stall at TGS.

To date the students have raised the magnificent sum of **£1,408.44**



SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) Education

Tadcaster Grammar prides itself on the promotion of SMSC, through a wide and varied curriculum, through our VT structure and in the way we celebrate diversity and respond to world events. Below is a breakdown of what SMSC means, and in future Newsletters we will have an SMSC section to keep you informed of what has been going on.

Provide every student with the opportunity to access a defined menu of experiences in each key stage beyond the classroom
 Place emphasis in our curriculum on global citizenship, creativity and enterprise, health and well-being
 Tadcaster Grammar School – Culture of Excellence

SPIRITUAL

Ofsted – Pupils’ spiritual development is shown by their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people’s faiths, feelings and values
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences



MORAL

Ofsted – Pupils’ moral development is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong readily apply this understanding in their own lives and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, and being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues



SOCIAL

Ofsted – Pupils’ social development is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain



CULTURAL

Ofsted – Pupils’ cultural development is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others
- understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain
- knowledge of Britain’s democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities
- interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity, and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities



The school’s thoughtful and wide ranging promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical wellbeing enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community

Ofsted: School Inspection Handbook Outstanding Overall effectiveness January 2015

IMPORTANT

Contact Details/Medical Information

To protect the Data we hold for you we are no longer issuing paper copies home and would therefore like to ask parents to inform the school of any changes to contact details or student medical information directly to Student Records Manager a.haddock@tgsch.uk or Matron j.chauda@tgsch.uk throughout the Academic Year. Check the details held via your E-Portal access. If you do not have a password to log in contact s.south@tgsch.uk or if you do require a paper copy to amend details contact a.haddock@tgsch.uk. If you subscribe to Letters Home via the school website, please remember to Update your Preferences if you change your email.



Christmas Cheer For Children

Special Christmas boxes wrapped with love are on their way to disadvantaged children, thanks to the generosity of students and staff at Tadcaster Grammar School.



The annual shoebox appeal through Children In Distress always touches the heartstrings of students at the school and this year was no exception, with 277 boxes being sent to the sick and needy in the Balkans and Eastern Europe.

Filled with essential supplies such as toiletries, books and toys, the many boxes were loaded into the Children in Distress van by students in crocodile

fashion, as they passed them from one to the other down a long corridor and out to Eddie Errington, Appeals Co-ordinator for York & District branch, who entered into the Christmas spirit by wearing his Santa hat and really looking the part.

Susy Laidlaw, Teacher of Business and Commercial Subjects at Tadcaster Grammar School, praised all the Sixth Form students who had given their time to co-ordinate this year's collection. "Once again this has been a tremendous effort by the whole school community, but especially our Sixth Form students who co-ordinated this year's collection. "However, special thanks must go to Holly Dawkes, Lucy Chapman and Ella Middlemiss for their commitment and drive and working so hard to make this happen," she added.

"Children In Distress relies on the generosity and support of individuals like the students at Tadcaster Grammar School to help change lives," said Mr Errington. "You can make someone feel special and bring joy, smiles and laughter for weeks to come, as this may be the only Christmas gift a child receives," he added. Please make a difference by contacting Eddie on 01904 765199 or visit the website at www.childrenindistress.org





Carol Service Celebrates Christmas in the Community

Tadcaster Grammar School hosted the annual Christmas Carol Service at St Mary's Church and brought Christmas to the community through music and drama.

The bells of St Mary's rang out beforehand to herald the start of the Service and those ringing in the bell tower were either students or members of staff. The Chamber Choir and Pop Choir delighted a large congregation with their renditions of A Wreath of Carols, When A Child Is Born, Torches and Tell Out the News, to name but a few. The Pop Choir was accompanied by talented Year 11 student Penny Meek on the piano and fellow Year 11 student Megan Day



sang O Holy Night. Lucy Allis from Year 13 sang the first verse of Once In Royal David's City and congregational carols were interspersed with readings by several students and Jeremy Airey, representing the School Governors.



A welcome addition to this year's Carol Service was a play entitled Shepherds On The Hillside, delivered with confidence and in costume by Year 7 students.

Reverend Canon Sue Sheriff thanked all who had taken part. "Once again you have reached an incredibly high standard and this year there have been some extra lovely moments with the addition of the Drama Club and their innovative production and the Pop Choir with their sense of fun," she said. Rev Sheriff also paid tribute to the bell ringers praising their professionalism. She thanked all those who attended, stating that the School had kindly named St Mary's Church as this year's recipient of the collection.





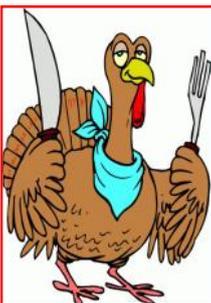
Christmas Jumper Day for Shelter

Tadcaster Grammar School Students and Staff get into the spirit of Christmas Jumper Day by posing for a photograph. The magnificent sum of £876.53 was raised for Shelter.



The whole school also enjoyed Christmas lunch accompanied by festive music from The Big Band and vocal soloist Alicia Fletcher.

A total of 1,150 Christmas lunches were served to students and members of staff.



Well Done and a massive thank-you to Maggie and her wonderful team in the kitchen!





On Song at Ainsty Carols

Young voices raised the roof at Tadcaster Grammar School, as four schools came together to sing at the annual Ainsty Carols.

Taking part this year were Tadcaster East, resplendent in their 'Santa' hats, Riverside, Long Marston and St Joseph's. Each choir performed a selection of festive favourites, with Riverside even providing musical accompaniment on xylophones. Tadcaster Grammar School's Concert Band also entertained and led the mass singing of popular carols—**Charlotte Render (left) and James Tucker (below)**

The Ainsty Carols is always a fitting end to the Christmas term and a good introduction for Year 6 children who will enrol at Tadcaster Grammar School next year. Thank you to all who took part!





Out and About with the Sax Ensemble

Mr Hainsworth and the Sax Ensemble helped spread some Christmas cheer when they visited Highfield Care Home at Scarthingwell and Popple Well Spring in Tadcaster



TGS Christmas Concert Was A Fitting End Of Term Celebration

(Photographs by Steve Smith)

Tadcaster Grammar School students proved what a talented bunch they are when they presented their Christmas Concert.

The Hall was filled with the sound of music as the Pop Choir, Chamber Choir, Concert Band, Big Band, String Group, Jam Club and the Saxophone Group came together to present a celebration of the festive season. There was some fine solo singing too and a cello solo from the talented Lawrence Jeffrey-Parkinson. Refreshments were served in the hall at the interval and students raising funds for Operation Wallacea held a giant raffle with some fantastic prizes.





CHRISTMAS CARDS

By Mrs Lattimore (Subject Leader: Art)

This year we set all Year 7 students the challenge of designing the Headteacher's Christmas card.

It was a very important task as the card, which is sent to more than 200 people and companies, needed to be a true reflection of the high standards and creativity that we have here at Tadcaster Grammar School.

Needless to say...you didn't disappoint us! It was an absolute pleasure to see all of the different responses to the task, lots of which must have taken many hours to complete.

The Art department looked at every design before making the very difficult decision of selecting the winning entries.

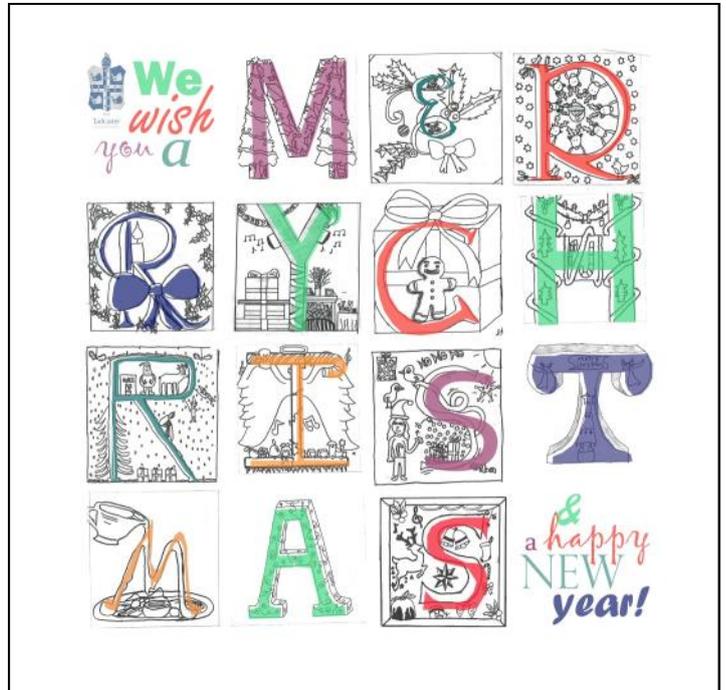
Fourteen designs were used on the completed card which we hope you agree looks fabulous.

Congratulations to Lucy Atkinson, Eleanor Betts, Abigail

Russell, Hayden Catt, Alana Cave-Bannister, Grace Blake, Toby Hampton, Matthew Hughes, Trixie Mercer, Brooke Smith, Lucy Rowell, Mia Rose, Will Ackroyd and Alex O'Toole whose designs were used.

House points have been awarded to all students who entered.

Well Done and Thank You Year 7!



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS

