

# Cookstown High School

# MAGAZINE

2023 / 24



## Hockey

CHS make History by winning all three of the junior tournaments

## The Sound of Music

An unforgettable evening was had by everyone in attendance, and it was brilliant to see CHS revive their iconic school musical.

## Iceland 2024

Such a surreal experience being in a geothermal pool with speckles of snow falling.

# Contents

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## Iceland 2024

*It was such a surreal experience being in a geothermal pool with speckles of snow falling!*



## Colour Run

66 ▶

*As well as having fun, a fantastic amount was raised for our school funds and this year's chosen charity – The Mid Ulster MS Society.*

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## The Sound of Music

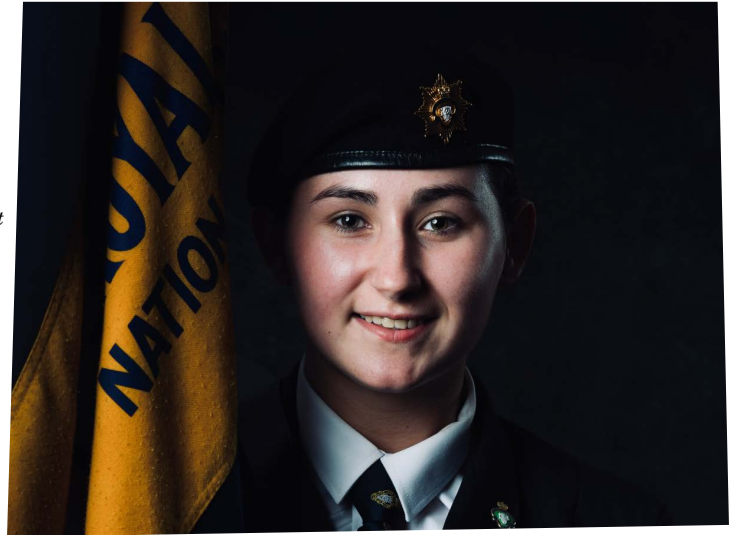
*An unforgettable evening was had by everyone in attendance, and it was brilliant to see Cookstown High School revive their iconic school musical.*



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### National Youth Standard Bearer

*Due to me winning the competition I was made aware that I would be given the honour and privilege of being a part of the Queen's funeral procession.*



### Boys Hockey

*The junior hockey teams have been unstoppable this season winning all available silverware!*

86 ◀

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### Annual Girls Hockey and Netball Awards Dinner

*This year's awards dinner saw over 100 students attend what is now seen as one of the most popular dates in the sporting calendar.*



# Principal's Foreword



I am delighted to welcome you to our latest edition of the Cookstown High School magazine. I hope that as you read it, you will appreciate our pupils' accomplishments and the various school events, and that you will be as proud of their individual talents and gifts as we are. The vibrancy and ambition of the school is reflected in not only the breath and diversity of activities, but also in the character of our students: modest, caring, and hard-working. Cookstown High School is a remarkable place to work and learn and my thanks go to everyone who makes this possible.

I hope you enjoy reading about the excellent achievements of 2023 to 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G.J. Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**G.J.EVANS**  
PRINCIPAL

# Message from the Chair of the Board of Governors

Welcome to our school magazine for 2023/24. As Chairperson of Cookstown High School Board of Governors it gives me great pleasure every year to invite you to look through the pages & feel immense pride at what our pupils & staff have achieved during the preceding academic year.

In these challenging economic times it is good to see that our children are being offered so many opportunities to learn, grow in character & develop new skills. This year has been particularly successful for sport & Cookstown High School has seen the Richardson Cup, Bannister Bowl & Ferris Cup come home to our trophy cabinet. It was also so good to see the return of a staged show & The Sound of Music showcased the talent that we are very proud to have within our school.

You also get to read some items written by the pupils & see some of their work, as well as see photographic record of trips that have taken place. All of this serves as a permanent reminder of very positive school experiences that the children & parents can turn back to in years to come.

I thank the editorial team who do a very professional job in producing this magazine & know that you will be very impressed as you look through 2023/2024 in Cookstown High School



LYNNE DRIPPS





# Staff 2023-24

## **PRINCIPAL**

Miss G Evans BA PGCE NPQH

## **VICE PRINCIPALS**

Mrs C Allen BA PGCE PQH(NI)

Mr A McGeown BSc PGCE

## **SENIOR TEACHERS**

Mrs F Gormley BMus PGCE ATCL Cert FSMus MEd FCIEA

Mr R Johnston BEd MSC PQH(NI)

## **ART**

Mrs N McCabe BDes PGCE

Mrs K Fields BA PGCE

Miss J Smith PGCEa

## **BUSINESS STUDIES**

Mrs D Foster BEd

Mrs L Johnston BA QTS

Mr L Stewart BSc PGCE

## **ENGLISH**

Mrs G McDonnell BA PGCE

Mr L Forbes BA PGCE

Mr S Graham BA PGCE

Miss L Hanna BA PGCE

Mrs R Thompson BA PGCE

Mrs A Smyth BA PGCE

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Mrs N Hagan BSc PGCE

Dr H Kane BSc PhD PGCE

Mrs C Porte BSc PGCE

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

Mrs T McElhatton BSc PGCE

Mrs N Cheevers BSc PGCE

Miss E Faulkner PGCE

Mrs F Gormley BMus PGCE ATCL Cert FSMus MEd FCIEA

Mrs L Johnston BA QTS

Dr H Kane BSc PhD PGCE

Mrs L Lee BSc PGCE

Mrs C McFlynn BSc PGCE Dip German

Mrs R McMurray BSc PGCE

Miss M Hughes BSc PGCE

## **HISTORY**

Mrs R Sloan BA, PGCE

Mr J Henderson BA PGCE

Mrs C Porte BSc PGCE

## **HOME ECONOMICS**

Mrs A Halliday BA MSc PGCE Cert.Ind.St  
Cert.RE Cert.HP

Miss C Johnston PGCE

Mrs L Lee BSc PGCE

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Mr R Johnston BEd MSC PQH(NI)

Mrs K McKenna BSc PGDFHE

Mrs J White BSc MSc PGCE

## **LEARNING for LIFE and WORK**

Mrs N Cheevers BSc PGCE

## **LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE**

Mrs K Fields BA PGCE

Mrs L Stewart Murray BSc Hons PGCE

Mr J Hastings BSc PGCE PAPAA

## **MATHEMATICS**

Dr K Davidson BSc PhD PGCE

Mr G Cuddy BEng PGCE

Mrs H Graham BSc PGCE

Mrs C Hall BSc PGCE

Mrs Z Johnston BSc PGCE

Mr B Lowe BEd QTS

Mrs J McMullan BSc PGCE

Miss Sarah Sinclair BEd PGCE

Mr C Wilson BSc PGCE PG Cert Careers  
Ed and Guidance

**MODERN LANGUAGES**

**Dr A Ranchoux BA MA PhD PGCTHE PGCE**  
**MCP CIW**  
 Mrs C Allen BA PGCE PQH(NI)  
 Mrs C McFlynn BSc PGCE Dip German  
 Mrs E Murphy BA PGCE

**MUSIC**

**Mrs F Gormley BMus PGCE ATCL**  
**CertFSMus MED FCIEA**  
 Mrs H Blackwood MBE MSc BMus PGCE Dip RS  
 MCGI MInstLM

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

**Mr M Haycock BSc MSc PGCE Dip Sports Psy**  
 Mrs N Cheevers BSc PGCE  
 Mrs L Johnston BA QTS  
 Miss R Kerr BSc PGCE

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**Mrs H Hamilton BEd**  
 Mrs H Blackwood MBE MSc BMus PGCE Dip  
 RS MCGI MInstLM  
 Mrs L Lee BSc PGCE  
 Mrs R Montgomery B Ed

**SCIENCE**

**Mr N Agnew MSc PGCE**  
 Dr A Morgan MSc PhD PGCE  
 Mrs R McMurray BSc PGCE  
 Mr P Williamson BSc PGCE  
 Mrs H Brooks BEd  
 Mrs J Freeburn BA PGCE Cert RE  
 Mr N Graham BSc PGCE  
 Mr N Hastings BSc PGCE

**TECHNOLOGY**

**Mr P Carson BEd PGCTE PGDTE**  
 Mr G Cuddy BEng PGCE  
 Mr S Donnelly BSc PGCE  
 Mrs R Harpur BSc PGCE  
 Mr D McKenna BEd

**SEnCo**

**Mrs J Crawford BEd PGCE**

**HEADS OF YEAR**

Year 8  
 Dr H Kane BSc PhD PGCE  
 Year 9  
 Mrs J Freeburn BA PGCE Cert RE  
 Year 10  
 Mrs H Blackwood MBE MSc BMus PGCE Dip RS  
 MCGI MInstLM / Mr B Lowe BEd QTS  
 Year 11  
 Mr D McKenna BEd  
 Year 12  
 Mr J Henderson BA PGCE  
 Year 13 & 14  
 Mrs L. Johnston BA QTS

**ADMINISTRATIVE & SUPPORT STAFF**

Mrs K Anderson BA  
 Mrs S Brimage  
 Mr R Brown  
 Mrs L Brown  
 Mrs A Currie  
 Mrs E Donaldson SEN  
 Mrs C Donnelly  
 Mrs D Duffin  
 Miss K Duffin  
 Mr T Ferguson  
 Mr A Forrest  
 Mrs C Gilmour BA  
 Mr B Gourley  
 Mrs L Harkness  
 Mrs D Hayes Adv Dip  
 Mrs D Hepburn BA DIS MSC  
 Mrs S Holmes Dip PCDP  
 Mrs J Hunter  
 Mrs L Johnston  
 Mrs M McGaughey  
 Miss R Moffett  
 Mrs L Morrison PGCFHE  
 Mrs L Morton BEd PGCE  
 Mrs C Robinson  
 Miss E Simpson  
 Mrs C Taylor  
 Mrs E Weir  
 Miss L Wilson

**BUILDINGS SUPERVISORS**

Mr K Rollins  
 Mr N Anderson

**GROUNDSMEN**

Mr P Cross  
 Mr A Davidson

**LUNCHTIME SUPERVISORS**

Mrs N Anderson  
 Mrs C Evans  
 Mrs K Kelly  
 Mrs L Reid  
 Mrs R Smyton  
 Mrs M Speirs  
 Mrs M Thompson

**Names in Bold –Head of Department**





Pupils at Cookstown High School have once again achieved an excellent set of A Level results, and the school community celebrates as they continue their journey to university, apprenticeship, further education, or the world of work. As a combined grammar and secondary school, we are an inclusive community, where talents are nurtured, and pupils are challenged in a supportive environment to achieve their best grade possible, securing the future for our young people.

In addition to academic excellence, we offer a range of pupil leadership opportunities, extra-curricular societies and clubs, competitive sports, drama and music, and we have fostered relationships with businesses as well as local and national universities; all of these opportunities give our pupils the edge. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to participate in a range of international visits to broaden horizons.

Governors and staff are delighted that 31% of all grades achieved by pupils in school were A\* or A. This keeps Cookstown High School pupils above the Northern Ireland average for top grades. We are delighted that the vast majority of pupils have secured their first choice of university place.

The percentage of A\*-B grades is excellent at 57%, demonstrating that the very strong work ethic of pupils and an application of very high standards by staff, has ensured





7 pupils achieved a sweep of at least 3 A\* and A grades:

Faye Anderson	A*A*A
Nicole Badger	A*AA
Mya Black	A*A*A
Emma Caskey	A*A*A
Leandra Frank	AAAA
Katie Kennedy	A*AA
Hannah Kenny	A*AAB

Commenting on the results, Miss Evans said, "We are very proud of our pupil's excellent performances this year, where ambitions have been realised through hard work and commitment. I would also like to pay tribute to our very talented and committed staff, who go above and beyond to ensure each individual realises their potential. I would like to congratulate pupils on their achievements and thank parents for their continued support. It has been a pleasure working with our Year 14 pupils and seeing so many of them excel during their time at Cookstown High School. It is great to see so many of our pupils securing fantastic opportunities next year, not just at some of the most prestigious universities in the UK, but also with employers to follow degree apprenticeship programmes".

While these results are very pleasing, more importantly they are permitting our young people access to their desired pathways on the next phase of their educational journey. Our pupils have worked so diligently this year, and they have produced results they should be incredibly proud of; we are excited to see what they go on to achieve in the future.

that Cookstown High School has a sustained reputation for academic excellence. The success across subject areas is testament to the hard work and dedication of pupils and staff. A 100% A\*-C success rate was celebrated in Art and Design, English Literature, Geography, Health and Social Care, ICT, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Spanish and Sport.

*The success across subject areas is testament to the hard work and dedication of pupils and staff.*

*31% of all grades achieved by pupils in school were A\* or A*

# Exams A Level

AS Level - 3 A grades



AS Level - 2 A grades or more



# Exams A Level

AS Level - 1 A grade or more



**A Level - 2 A's or more**



**A Level - 3 A grades**



*This keeps Cookstown High School pupils above the Northern Ireland average for top grades.*

*We are delighted that the vast majority of pupils have secured their first choice of university place.*



Pupils and staff celebrated another superb set of GCSE results. We were delighted that 24% of all grades achieved were A\*/A grades and an impressive 42% of all grades achieved were A\*-B.

Cookstown High School has a proven track record of securing outstanding GCSE results for our pupils, with the majority of the year group choosing to study A levels or BTEC qualifications in our high performing Sixth Form. We were delighted that 84% of pupils achieved 5A\*-C grades and 68% of pupils achieving 5A\*-C grades including English and Maths. As a Combined Grammar and Secondary School, we encourage all pupils to

perform to the very best of their ability supported by a caring and dedicated staff.

These results reflect the hard work and commitment of pupils, the support of parents and very high expectations of our staff.

Departmental results are excellent: eight departments achieved over 50% A\*-B grades including, English Literature, Engineering, Health and Social Care, Digital Technology, Maths, Further Maths, Physics, and Religious Studies.

Miss Evans acknowledged the achievement of

pupils, "We are very proud that the hard work and determination of pupils and staff has been rewarded with these excellent examination results. All pupils can be proud of their achievements, they have worked very hard over the last two years and many dreams have been realised within this set of results. The partnership between home and school is an essential one, and I would also like to thank parents for their continued support to enable our young people to be successful. I would also like to pay tribute to our staff; through expert instruction and a determination to do their best for each child, we can be very proud of what has been achieved".

Sixteen pupils achieved a combination of top grades across their subjects:

Katie Ferguson	8 A*'s and 1 A
Jamie Adams	2 A*'s, 4 As and 3 Bs
James Barbour	1 A*, 6As, 1B and 1 C*
Matt Barrett	5 As and 4 Bs
Martins Baufals	1A*, 4As, 3Bs and 1C
Hannah Brownlow	2 A*'s, 3 As and 4 Bs
Euan Brown	1A*, 5As, 2Bs and 1C*
Maddison Connolly	2 A*'s, 5As, 1B and 1C*
Timothy Crawford	1 A*'s, 7 As and 2 Bs
Lois Cunningham	7 As and 2 Bs
Jenna Greaves	2A*'s, 3As and 4Bs
Nathan Hamilton	2 A*'s, 6 As and 1 B
Hannah Johnston	5As, 2Bs and 2C*s
Timothy Johnston	1 A*, 6 As and 3 Bs
Peter Mitchell	1A*, 5As and 3Bs
Megan McKay	4 A*'s and 5 As
Harry McQueen	7As, 1B and 1C*
Kym Moore	9 As
Lois Simpson	2A*, 3As, 2 Bs, 1C and 1 C*

At Cookstown High School, we strive for excellence, offer a myriad of opportunities for our pupils to develop their character and support pupils every step of the way. We are guided by our Christian ethos, where all pupils are unique, precious and possess a range of gifts and talents. We endeavour to nurture these gifts and talents and encourage all our young people to achieve and be their very best.

GCSE- 9 A grades



*24% of all grades achieved were A\*/A grades and an impressive 42% of all grades achieved were A\*-B*

Exams GCSE

# Exams GCSE



**GCSE- 7 or more A grades**



**GCSE-8 or more A grades**



**GCSE- 6 or more A grades**



# Art

Along with the day-to-day teaching of Art and Design within the department GCSE and A-Level pupils got the opportunity to participate in some workshops and visit galleries.

In October a group of Cookstown GCSE and A-Level pupils went on a Shared Education trip to Stephen Farnan's pottery workshop in Belfast. It was an invaluable experience for the pupils were Stephen talked about his work, how to set up a business and demonstrated some of the ce-

ramic techniques he uses. The pupils then got the opportunity to visit one of Farnan's shops and do a decal print onto clay.

There were three winners in the local Credit Union art competition. They were Jasmine Glendinning, Jamie Ferguson and William Graham. They all progressed to the National Level.

In early November there was another Shared Education trip with Holy Trinity college to the RUA

exhibition in the Ulster Museum. This year past pupil Mollie Brown was selected to showcase her installation art work. This is a wonderful achievement as there is a rigorous selection process by the RUA panel to select work to be exhibited in this exhibition. Lucky for our pupils Mollie was there to give them a talk about her art work.

Later in November year 11 pupils visited the Tyrone Crystal factory in Dungannon. This was another Shared Education and a lottery funded





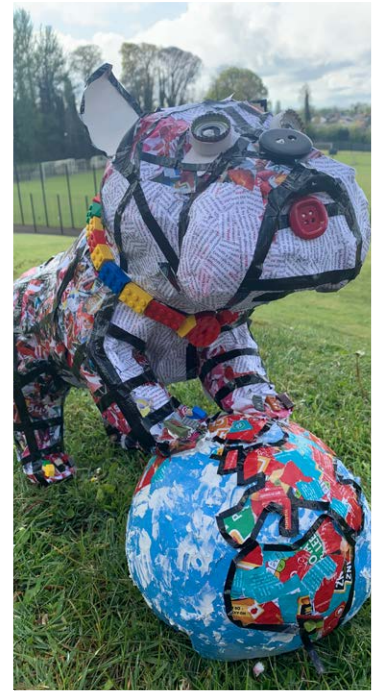


event. Pupils were given a talk on the history of Tyrone Crystal and then got the chance to do some glass engraving. They all completed a finished piece of crystal.

In December Cookstown High School and Holy Trinity College Shared Education Art Exhibition was in the Burnavon Arts Centre. On display in the upper gallery was a selection of GCSE and A-Level pupil's work. This was a great occasion to showcase the work of pupils from both schools to the community.

Pupils in Year 8, 9 and 10 completed a number of different projects this school year. Year 8 completed a colour theory still-life project and ceramic fish project. Year 9 worked on a portrait project and creative industries project where they made a Toby Jug and year 10 did a figurative project where some pupils made a figurative sculpture. Lots of highly skilful and creative work was created.

Junior LSC pupils worked very hard as well and in particular made lovely ceramic pumpkins



for Hallowe'en and weaved a dream catcher in the spring term.

It was certainly an eventful and busy year in the art department!

Mrs McCabe  
Curriculum Leader Art and Design

The pupils in the LSC have worked hard this year to complete their Entry Level Art. They have used a range of media including paint, ceramics, textiles and print. They explored the elements of Art to complete two final outcomes for assessment. Last academic year two pupils' cushions were selected for the True Colours Exhibition and are currently on display in their online exhibition. Well done to all.

Furthermore, three GCSE pupils work were selected for possible inclusion in the CCEA annual exhibition and the agreement trials. It is a wonderful achievement to be even selected by CCEA moderators for these events. Well-done, to all Entry Level, GCSE and A-Level pupils who worked very hard on their examination projects.







# Biology

## *Year 13 A-Level Biologists Explore Umbra Nature Reserve*

On Wednesday, 20th March, Year 13 A-level Biology students embarked on a field trip to the Umbra Nature Reserve to study its unique sand dune ecosystem. This hands-on experience allowed students to apply their theoretical knowledge in a real-world setting, enhancing their understanding of ecological principles.

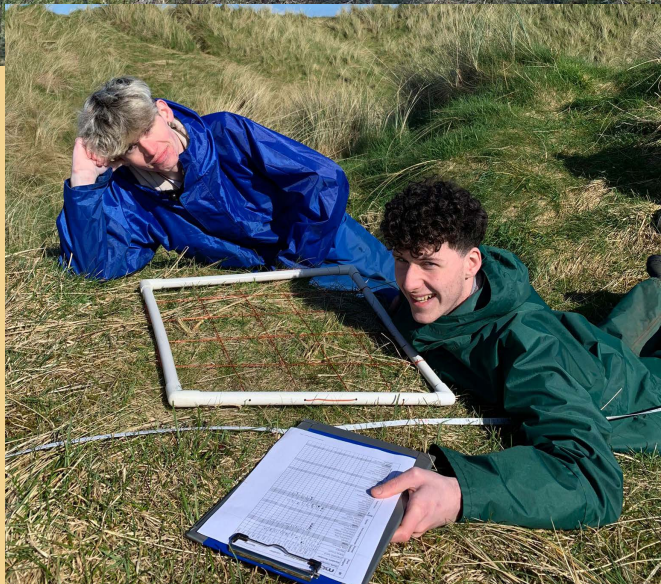
The day began with an orientation led by Mrs McLucas, an ecologist specialising in coastal ecosystems. Armed with quadrats and transect tapes, the students were ready for random sampling. Working in pairs, they placed quadrats at random points along the dunes, meticulously recording plant species, their abundance, and distribution patterns.

Throughout the day, students observed a variety of plants adapted to the harsh, shifting environment of the dunes, including marram grass, common vetch and sand couch. Mrs McLucas highlighted the importance of these plants in stabilizing the dunes and supporting wildlife.

By the end of the trip, students had collected substantial data to analyse back at school which they used to complete a practical report as part of their A-level course.

The visit to Umbra Nature Reserve was an invaluable educational experience, bringing the dynamic world of sand dune ecosystems to life and highlighting the importance of practical fieldwork in biological studies.





# Business Studies

## Fortis Mini Company

*At the start of the academic year, Year 13 Business Studies students came together to form a mini company to expand their knowledge of business management and day-to-day business processes.*



The pupils initially applied for their roles within the business, outlining their skills and qualities in an application process which would then be analysed by their teachers. Roles within the company varied from Managing director to Finance manager, Marketing director and beyond. Once roles were assigned, the students began to meet once or twice a week to discuss product ideas, logo possibilities and generally brainstorm on how the business would operate and what its aim would be.

The decision was made that the pupils would name the company 'Fortis' meaning strength in Latin. This unique but recognisable business name is tied in with the overall aim of the company. The company was set up to open a conversation specifically within schools and with young people about their mental health, thus forming an opportunity for young people to open up about their issues. All of this was taken into consideration when the marketing team created the company logo, with it showcasing a heart within a brain, once again outlining the aim of positive mental health.

Once company logos, aims and roles had been decided, the pupils met to make a final decision on their choice of product, with the decision being made that they would sell comfortable and innovative hoodies as a way for people to identify with the Fortis movement. These hoodies displayed the company logo on the front, along with the definition of the word Fortis on the back to make people aware of the brand and make it easily recognisable. The product was then formulated by locating suppliers for the hoodies, and local suppliers to facilitate the printing onto the hoodies. This was all initially financed by shareholders investment from pupils, teachers and SLT members within the school as well as fundraisers conducted throughout the year. These fundraisers included hot dog sales for younger pupils and sweet sales at our 'Sound of Music' school play.



THE DECISION WAS MADE THAT THE PUPILS WOULD NAME THE COMPANY FORTIS MEANING STRENGTH IN LATIN. THIS UNIQUE BUT RECOGNISABLE BUSINESS NAME IS TIED IN WITH THE OVERALL AIM OF THE COMPANY.



Once the company's inventory arrived, the pupils set out to promote the product through their social media platforms. These were used to promote/ provide updates on the product, engage with the company's audience and raise awareness for mental health as a whole.

The pupils were not only selling to the local community, but they were also invited to various Young Enterprise fairs such as St George's Market, Belfast, in early December as well as Rushmere shopping centre, Craigavon, in early February. These experiences were massively helpful for the young people to interact with customers, enhancing their sales skills, as well as observing other small businesses to take inspiration from. The small fairs overall were a huge success, with Fortis even coming home from the Rushmere fair with the 'Best Visiting Company' award!!

The young pupils can now look back on this experience very fondly, with some maybe even getting a glimpse of what they will now aspire to pursue as a future career. All of the pupils worked incredibly well together, learning immensely valuable skills such as time management, teamwork, organisation, communication, money management and so much more. These are skills which all the students will be able to use in their future careers no matter what path they choose.

*Students - Jamie Kerrigan and Oran Kennedy (joint managing directors), Sam Purvis (finance director), Rachel Brown (sales director), Rachel Farr (marketing director), Peter McClean (purchasing director), Rowan Hobson and Ethan Gordon (joint secretaries), Jack McClure, Joshua Whyte, Jack Sweetnam, Joel Martin (marketing assistants), Aaron Whitten and Danielle Forsythe (sales assistants), Tristan Purdy (purchasing assistant)*

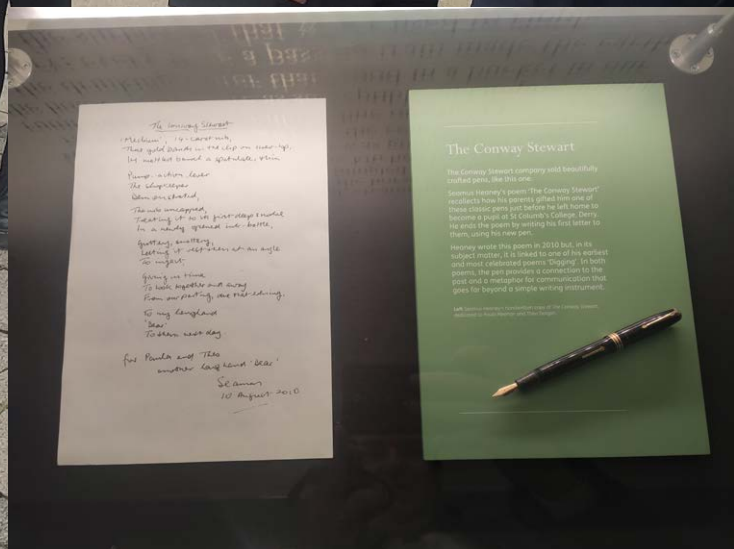
*Teachers - Mr. Stewart & Mrs. Foster*

# Seamus Heaney

# English

## VISIT TO SEAMUS HEANEY CENTRE

On Monday 5th February, a small group of Year 12 English Literature pupils travelled to HomePlace: The Seamus Heaney Centre with pupils from Holy Trinity College as part of a Shared Education Project trip. Pupils had the opportunity to learn about Heaney's childhood, life and family, and his connections to the locality. They gained an insight into some of his poetic and creative inspirations and heard recordings of Heaney reading many of his famous poems. The pupils also participated in a lecture where they learned more about two of poems from the GCSE Conflict Anthology. Following this, we also took a trip to Heaney's final resting place to pay our respects. A great time was had by all as pupils got the chance to learn more of the man 'who rhymed to see himself' and used the 'squat pen' to do his 'digging'.





## VIP in my life

by Emma Patrick 10CC

How often do you think of that one very important person in your life? That one individual who has made a monumental impact on you; so much so, that you would call them your hero. I would consider that I have a hero in my life. A figure who I look up to, someone who I can relate to. Most importantly, someone who helped me through my own personal battles, who was there to support me, reassure me and comfort me in times of need.

This person doesn't have any supernatural abilities but that doesn't matter to me. Not at all. A hero is defined through someone you admire... and one person who I admire- is my own mother. She can be described in many ways, but a word that I think fits pretty neatly- is resilient. I see her as such a dedicated and hardworking woman. One who has been able to adapt to anything thrown at her.

From driving all the way to Belfast for work when pregnant with me, to helping my dad in his business while at the same time taking care of my brother and me. It is like she has an internal flame

that never goes out, being able to light up a room just by being in it. Just that radiant smile alone could bounce back anyone's gloomy, dull, and tedious day.

In my opinion, I think my mum deserves a reward for being such an outstanding listener. You could tell her anything that hasn't already been written down and she would give her full attention to what you have to say. Having someone truly understand what it's like to deal with problems that you face is such a breath of fresh air!

From my mum having an exact replica of the challenges I face in school, to the most minute things like our sense of style and love of scented candles that we would find in Tesco. I unsurprisingly take so much from my mum which creates a bond as tough as steel.

The lessons she taught me. I reminisce on moments where my mum has inspired me. She is a shoulder for me to cry on. At times my mum and I will find ourselves having these prolonged conversations. They would just happen within the blink of an eye. Suddenly a minuscule topic morphs into a discussion that I would never forget. We delve into issues that I

would never think twice on and it always concludes with me learning something new. I cherish these golden moments.

You may ask "why I hold these memories so close to me?" My simple answer is that I learn so much from her. Doors in my head opening up to see different perspectives, always grateful for hands on lessons, like tying my shoelaces or folding a shirt. Such tiny little things mean a mass amount in retrospect.

Why she's my hero.

Overall.. the main reason why my mum is a true hero to me, is that she helped me get to where I am today. She is the influence in my life which I will always value. Without her, things in my life such as my hobbies, school, personality etc wouldn't be like what they are today.

Words can not describe for how thankful I am for my mum. She was that northern star that guided me on a path through my early years of life. An inspiring, determined, knowledgeable woman who I deem as my own personal hero.

Emma Patrick 10CC

## Granny's House

by Harriet Graham 8CA

My granny's house holds a special place in my heart because its where I have made countless memories and experience unconditional warmth and love.

Upon entering my granny's house, I am greeted with a sense of comfort and nostalgia. The familiar sights, smells, sounds and tastes of apple sponge cake, comforting coffee cake and cool velvety custard instantly make me feel at ease and relaxed.

At my granny's house there are traditions that I hold dear to my heart. Whether its Monday dinners after school, getting money for doing

homework while drinking orange juice out of wine glasses, the annual big bird watch when my cousin and I sit on the kitchen worktop watching the birds, endless stories, gardening with granda in the jungle of a garden or going on an expedition to the river, these activities have become cherished memories that I will have forever.

Her house has a lot of interesting features, like the Narnia cupboard in the spare bedroom upstairs where behind the fur coats is a door which I've never been in, the stairlift that goes at about two miles per hour or the bedroom that we are convinced is haunted after the door opened and closed by itself in the middle of the night. At Christmas the spare bedroom downstairs becomes a real-life Santa's grotto full of presents, wrapping paper and gift tags you can barely open the door, if you go within five feet of the door you

get a shout of "don't go in there" from granny. One of the most significant aspects of my granny's house is my granny and granda themselves. Their everlasting love, wisdom and endless stories as well as thousands of pictures, from granda on his ships to my granny's class plays or them just enjoying their lives, these have helped shape my values and enrich my life.

In conclusion, my granny's house is not just a physical place but a house of love, comfort and treasured memories. The experiences and lessons I have gained from this special place in my heart and continue to influence me in years to come.

## "SIMILIES"

BY RIANA CASTILHO 8CB

A simile is a comparison of two things using the words "like" or "as".

These are my similes

- 1) The moon looks **like** cheese.
- 2) Raindrops on the window look **like** tears.
- 3) The soap smelled **like** sweet strawberries.
- 4) The flowers looked **like** a pretty princess.
- 5) The waves were rough **like** a storm.
- 6) The clouds were as fluffy **as** cotton candy.

## My Favorite Place

by Jack Hargan 8CA

My favourite place in the world is my home. I know it may sound silly but think about it. You probably share a similar sentiment to your home, and all the memories you've made there. I've been in a few houses over the years, but all have shared one thing. They house me and those that I love.

My home has all my favourite things. My piano, my books, my bed. All these things and more are special to me because they've been with me so long, and because I just like using them. My home has my favourite people, my mum, dad, and if you can count her as a person, my dog Lola.

I've made many fond memories in my houses. While I can't recall most of them myself due to

them happening so long ago, my family have taken the liberty of recording a lot of them, from learning to crawl to riding a bike, it's all there. My mum and dad even have photos of my first day at each school year, they are important days after all.

I also love my room because it's my own personal space where I can have privacy and do my own thing. There's clothes, books and many other things that I find cool. A piano to play beautiful music on, toys to play with and a TV to watch shows on are just a few of the great things in there.

To sum it all up, my home is my favourite place because it has my favourite people, animals and things. Just being there reminds me that I am loved.

## My Favourite Place

by Ella Carvalho 8CB

I am here today to talk about my favourite place. I wonder could any of you guess where that might be and what would your thoughts be on your own favourite place?

Well.... I go to this place once a year at the start of the summer; we go at this time of year as it is our best chance of good weather. In previous years, it has been warm as wool with temperatures close to 30 degrees. To get to my favourite place, we had to get up super early at 5 am and go on a large boat.... The sailing was smooth and felt fast like lightning. This got us to Scotland, so we had a further two hours to drive. Does anyone know where we are headed....???

## My Hero

by Amelle Da Silva 10CC

Imagine - waking up from your slumber and immediately being hit with a runny nose and the emerging symptoms of a fever. Your body is sore and aching all over; all you can do is snuggle into your warm fluffy blankets, attempting to shield from the cold as your weak body is fighting its way through the pain. On your mind, is the ever-longing comfort from YOUR hero that your body is craving and urging for! The hero, who would fly in their own cape, and instantly give up their day for your safety, your need and your comfort. Just for you...

To me, that person, that HERO, is my beautiful mother! Her aroma is cloudy with all senses of love and wisdom, she is a glowing beam of support. Her heart is so vast, that all oceans could not compare! Her embrace and nurture, all comes free of charge as she welcomes everyone in with open arms.

Not only is she a mother, she is a sister, a daughter, an auntie and she is the most hardworking woman I've ever met. The most hard-working woman, I think I'll ever get to MEET. She has the most beautiful honey glazed brunette locks, glasses that sit on a wonky way on her face, and eyes like brown holes of hope and courage! Everyone deserves someone like my mother.

The one thing that repeatedly upsets me is the lack of love she sees and shares within herself. I wouldn't consider her insecure, but complicit in the false accusation that she is not beautiful, and as someone who views her as a guardian angel, it hurts me to witness. I will never accept this terminology, never on my own terms! She doesn't

After a long two hour drive, we made it to England where we had to wait to get into Whinell Forest. This is where we stayed for a busy week filled with exciting activities. These included kayaking, tree top climbing, wall climbing and crazy golf!! There were also indoor and outdoor swimming pools with lots of fun slides. In the forest, there is a shopping centre where you can buy anything you wish, from food to gifts and souvenirs.

This is my favourite place because there are so many things to do and you will always be kept busy. My favourite part of Whinell was the swimming pool, as you can stay there as long as you want and you don't have to book for a certain time. During the summer, I go here with my fam-

ily and stay in a Woodland Lodge.

think she's pretty but in my eye she is DIVINE. She doesn't believe her humour is remarkable but whenever I'm laughing through my wheezes and chuckles, life feels good!

She is completely selfless and as her daughter I admire that in her. The qualities and characteristics that she contains are something so unique, something so individual that even my favourite celebrity WOULD NOT come close too. My mum is my idol all through life.

My beautiful mother, Carole, has always been my band-aid in tough and difficult times. When I'm in tears or when I'm lazy she always has a method of making my life that bit more productive, bringing me back up to my feet within an instant! To my friends, she is a variety of things such as sweet, a great cook, fun and phenomenal all around.

Of course, as every mother and daughter does, we fight. We fight, A LOT and always about the silliest things! At the end of each fight and every disagreement, we conclude that the fights don't matter. The arguments do not equal us, or the love we give to each other. We could fight for a million years, and at the end still love each other through every aching bone in our bodies. This is our strength!

The love she shows my father is the type of ethereal romance you'd find in a novel, or a fairy tale! Of course, containing its own very prince and princess where they both find themselves in each other. Both like the lock and key theory in Biology, they were designed for each other, in every aspect. Their marriage last year in August honestly determined that fact. I could say it was beautiful over and over again, but it wouldn't sum it all up! The venue was nothing short of

heavenly, and the sound of laughter from family and friends was basically the definition of the word wholesome, it was so hard not to smile. I'm sure, on that day I was the closest I'd ever been to my parents!

I enjoyed my time at Whinell Forest so much that we are going again this year. I look forward to it because of all the fun things there are to do; it is guaranteed to be eventful with new activities being introduced every year and new slides being added to the swimming pool.

I have told you where my favourite place is... does anyone think they would like to go there???

I look forward to hearing where everyone else's favourite place is..

Thank you for listening.

That day was something so magical - spectacular even.

I had to walk down the aisle with my mother as unfortunately both of my grandparents have passed away. I can truthfully say we were our own water fountains. The tears were endless, rolling down our face to our cheeks like an infinite pool of all that is good in life. The slow, soft pulses of the music and the sweetly charismatic rhythm of the singers' vocal cords were in perfect coordination with our steps, as we slowly shuffled our way to the well dressed man already in tears due to the spectacular sight of his precious trophies - my father. It's like, finding someone you never knew you NEEDED! This is a moment I wish I could replay for a thousand nights...

When my granny passed away, we were each other's hand to hold. Constantly holding each other up so we could reach the finish line knowing we did it together. I would cry into her arms, sobbing and weeping and her reassurance taught me to be strong even though, she was suffering too.

This is why my mum is remarkable; when I think of my mother nothing negative stands out. She is steadfast in my life and I can always rely on her love.

I like Portrush because I have been going to it every year since I was young and I have been going with my family. We usually stay in my caravan and we stay for a week or so. The reason my family like to go there is because Portrush is easy to get to and the caravan is close to the middle of the town, so it means we can walk to the beach or anywhere else. The Jet Centre (close by in Coleraine) has a massive arcade, a bowling alley, Mini Golf and a cinema.

I look forward to listening to your speeches. That is all for today.....!!!

## Best place in the World

by Cora Driscoll 8CB

I am here today to talk about my favourite place... What is your favourite place? Is it somewhere exotic? Maybe a beach or a park? Perhaps your house or the place you do sports at? Can you guess my favourite place?

Well... I like the beach....!!! But my favourite place to go to the beach is at a certain place.... Can you guess where???

And I like it because it has more than just a beach... it has amusements and rides. All the amusements and rides are in Curry's Fun Park or

outside it... Have you guessed my favourite place yet?

I bet you probably have..... IT IS PORTRUSH! Let me tell you more.....!

Portrush is known for its arcades and amazing beaches... But it is also known for Curry's fun park. Curry's used to be called Barry's. (First opened in 1925); but it sadly closed in September 2019. One of the most popular rides there was the Big Dipper. This ride has been replaced by what is now called, "Aqua Valley." There is also the Giant's Causeway outside of Portrush; it is made up of 40,000 massive columns. The Giant's Causeway was discovered in 1692 by the Bishop of Derry.

## Summers Soon Here

by Bella Weir 8CA

Seagulls circle in the big, blue sky  
Coming from all far and wide.  
Sunbeams fall onto passers-by,  
Tempting people to come outside.

The whispering, tall trees,  
They dance, to the summer breeze,  
As the birds all join in.

Children laugh and love to play,  
Some of them try to fly a kite.  
They always moan at the end of the day,  
Because school is only a night away.

Sweet summer is here,  
It's here to play,  
Soon summer hols will be on their way!

They dream of the bell,  
That ends the day.  
The summer hols that come to play,  
Soon it'll be here.

Soon they'll play.

## The Outlaw's Redemption

by Tyler Kelso

There was once a group of fearless gun-slingers outlawed in states all across the America. Rip Van Winkle the leader of the group needed a place for the gang to lay low for a while. Soon he found one. A little valley near a town called St Helen's Oregon. In this town no one had heard about their last job back in Texas. Rip's gang had recently robbed one of the biggest banks in Texas and now the whole state was on look out for them. John was sent to scout out the town with Charles while Rip and Juan stayed and set up camp back in the valley.

"Try not to cause any trouble, because we are trying to keep a low profile" said Rip to John before he left.

The day was fierce hot. Soon John and Charles set off on their horses towards the town. As they rode into town they decided to split up to see if they could find anything worth robbing. John was walking when he noticed a sign that read "SALOON". He decided to go there as he could use a drink. The saloon was small and had a bar at the far end and poker tables on the right side. Down the left side there was a staircase which led up to the owner's room and some guest rooms. Silence descended as soon as John entered Was it because he was an outsider? Or was it because of the big iron on his hip?

He walked up to the bar and asked for a glass off whiskey. Without a word the bartender poured John up a glass.

"It's free for you sir" said the bartender sheepishly. Suddenly a shout came from the top of the stairs. The owner of the bar stumbled down the stairs drunkenly, "who are you?" called the man. "What's it to you" replied John. The man was now in front of John said "Get out of my bar". They eyeballed each other. "No" replied John coldly.

Irritated the man swung a punch at John; quickly John blocked it by grabbing the man's arms. He head-butted the man and tackled him to ground. The owner managed to push John off of him and scramble to his feet, as John tried to get up the owner kicked him in the stomach. Now in ex-

treme pain, John gets up and swings at the owner. While the owner is stunned John tackles him out the door and now both the owner and John are scrambling in the dirt. John throws one more punch before getting pulled off him by Charles. Quickly, Charles and John saddle up and ride out of town before getting into any more trouble especially because the whole town had seen John's fight.

As they rode back into where Rip and Juan where setting up camp they heard Rip and Juan arguing. "Idiota" shouted Juan "What did you just call me" Rip shouted back. "Whoa" said Charles as he ran in between them trying to break it up.

"We were only messing around, weren't we Juan" said Rip.

"Anyway, did you two find anything" said Rip trying to change the subject.

"Yes" replied Charles "There's a stagecoach passing by St Helens tomorrow at dawn with some very rich passengers on board". "Good" replied Rip. "Rest up boys we have a big day tomorrow".

It was barely light, and the heat was unbearable. The sun was beating down from the cloudless sky.

"John wake up were leaving now" whispered Juan, "grab your guns and saddle up". John hurried out of his tent nearly forgetting his revolver, the big iron. Everyone saddled up and set off hurrying to where Charles had told them the stagecoach was passing through.

"John?" said Rip as they were riding. "I heard about your little escapade in the saloon yesterday". "Don't even start" said John suddenly remembering yesterday's events. Before Rip could say anything else they reached a hill overlooking the road, after only a minute or so they saw the stage coach. They took off down the hill towards the road.

"Juan? Ride up in front and cause a distraction" shouted Rip.

"Charles, John you're with me".

Juan rode up in front of the stagecoach. Juan dismounted his horse a bit ahead of the stagecoach; he then ran onto the road in front of the coach and started begging for help. Rip, Charles and John rode up beside the coach and pointed their guns;

Rip aiming his golden double action revolver at the co-driver, Charles aiming his bolt-action at the driver and John with his big Iron aimed at the two passengers.

"Give us all your money and no-one gets hurt okay!" shouted Rip.

"Juan, go ahead and open up that lock box at the back of the coach".

Juan headed round the back of the stagecoach and broke open the lockbox by hitting the bottom of his revolver against the lock.

Suddenly, there was a thundering from down the road. Ten lawmen were riding towards the stagecoach.

"Everyone run" shouted Rip.

John, Charles and Rip took off on their horses before they left though Juan gave all the money to John.

"Split up" shouted Rip, "go through the trees".

John rode as fast as he could through the forest dodging trees and bullets left and right. John then rode over a stream and dismounted his horse. He hid behind a rock as his horse fled. A group of lawman thundered past him. Meanwhile, Charles rode out of the forest and headed across the grassy plains, unlucky for him his horse got spooked by a herd of plains bison and bucked him off. Charles lay on the ground winded and surrounded by lawmen.

They tied him up and brought him back to St Helens.

Juan was captured on sight; he didn't even try to run he just surrendered unlike Rip. Rip was being chased by the Sheriff and five other lawmen through the forest. He tried to jump over a rock and his horse tripped and got injured. So he had to run. He kept running through the trees until eventually the Sheriff used his lasso to capture him. Later he was shipped out to a remote prison on an island.

The next day John visited the camp to find the others but he was met by an empty camp. It was in that instant that John knew that they had all been arrested.

A few days later he left Oregon and moved to Colorado where he became a cattle rancher.

THE END

Time



# Geography

## Fieldwork

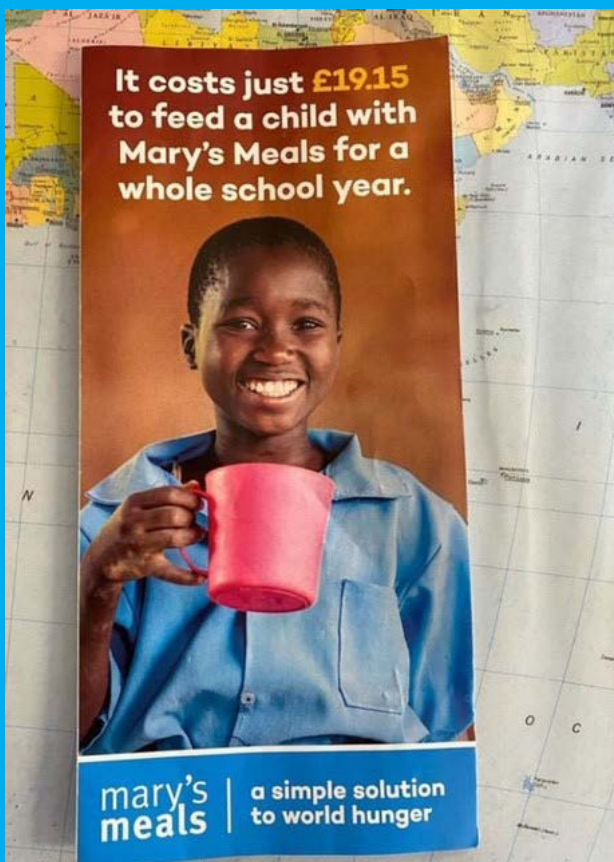
*Fieldwork in geography is invaluable for students, transforming theoretical knowledge into practical experience.*

It brings textbook concepts to life, enhancing understanding through direct observation of geographical phenomena. Fieldwork develops critical skills such as data collection, analysis, and teamwork, while fostering environmental awareness and responsibility. It also inspires a passion for geography, encouraging students to explore the world beyond the classroom. By engaging with real-world environments, students gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities of our planet, making fieldwork an essential component of a comprehensive geography education

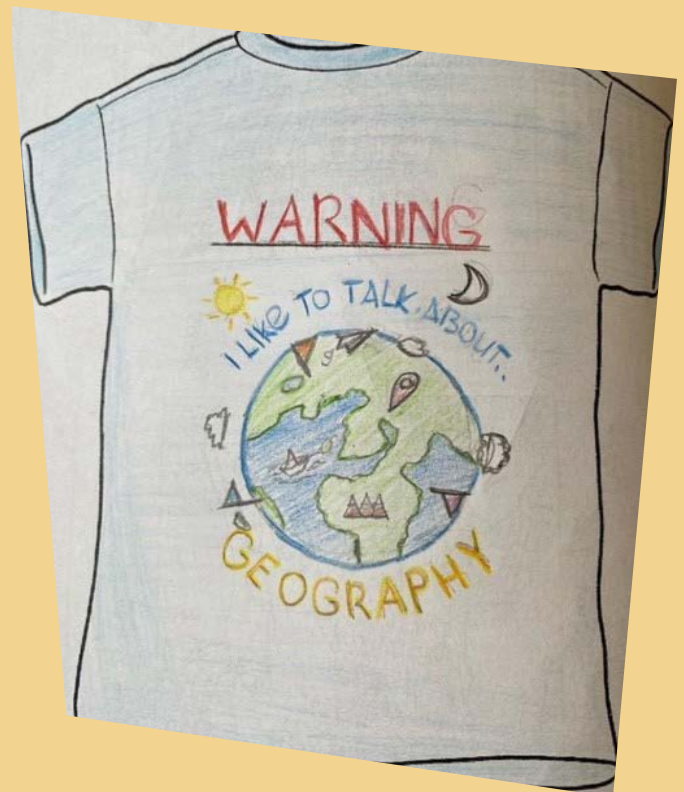


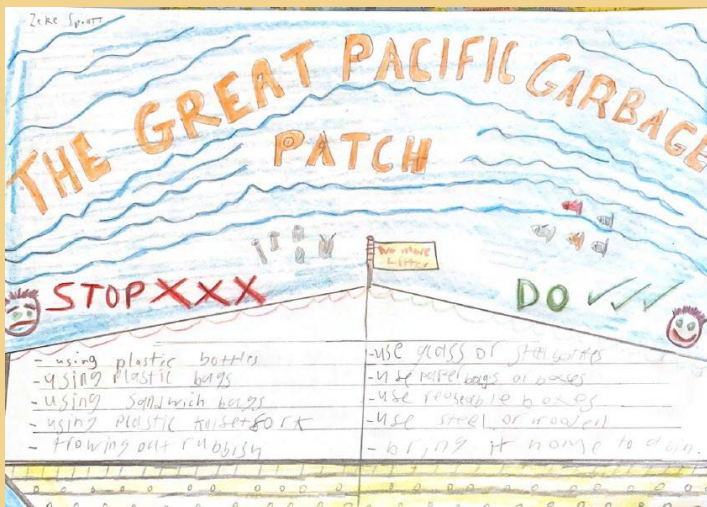
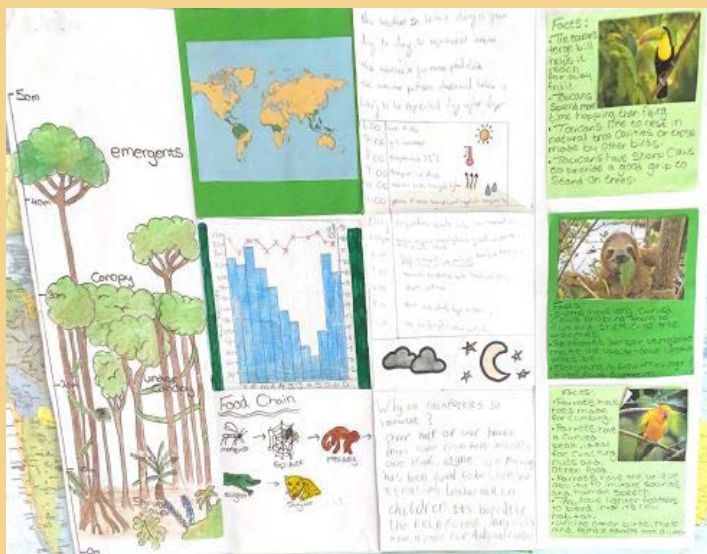
# Mary's Meals

The Geography Department raised money for the charity Mary's Meals. Mary's Meals feeds hungry children living in some of the world's poorest countries. More than two million children eat Mary's Meals every school day. By supporting this charity Cookstown High School has been able to pay for school meals for a whole year for 5 children.



In our Geography classroom, creativity thrives through various engaging activities. Students design T-shirts featuring their ideas about geography, fostering a personal connection to the places they study. Writing imaginative stories about river basins helps them understand the complexities of these systems. Additionally, crafting foldables about tropical rainforests allows for interactive learning, making the layers of the rainforest memorable. These hands-on projects not only enhance understanding but also make geography exciting and memorable. Through these creative endeavors, students develop a deeper appreciation for the world's diverse landscapes and cultures.





## DANNY RAINDROP

by Keeva McElhennon 9CB

### Danny Raindrop

Hi, I'm Danny. Danny Raindrop. Today I am going to tell you all about my journey as a raindrop down the River Bann. Now sit back, relax, and enjoy the ride.

My day started with me being rudely awakened by a loud bang. Before my brain could comprehend what was happening, and that the loud bang was a clap of thunder, I was flung out of my cloud and found myself doing summersaults through the air. I was falling as precipitation. I landed with a thud and found myself on top of a large mountain. The view was flawless! That's when I caught a glimpse of a large mass of water that looked familiar. It was Lough Neagh! I had been waiting for this day for a long, long, long time.

Once I had realised, I was on the Mourne Mountains I noticed there was a little teeny-tiny stream beside me. I concluded that that was my best bet to a good journey. As I slowly wiggled my way over, I was hoping that this was the source of the River Bann. The only way to find out was to take a chance.

I jumped into the stream with a splash, giving my face a good wash. I got goose bumps as the cold water washed over my body. I suddenly got an adrenaline rush and began to become impatient. I just wanted this tributary to join on to the main river channel. As I floated along the stream, I could feel the current getting faster. I could see that ahead of me there was a confluence which is

the point in which two rivers meet. I began to get excited.

As I joined the river channel I could feel butterflies in my stomach. I was in for it. I could see a meander ahead of me, which is just like a bend in a river. My goal was to stay on the inner side of the bend because I heard that it is slower than the outer edge of the meander. Once I got that obstacle over me, I soon realised that my journey was going to be full of meanders, twisting and turning like a snake across Northern Ireland. All I could do was hope for the best and close my eyes.

Forty-two fun filled miles later, I arrived in the UK's largest freshwater lake known as Lough Neagh. This was the part I was most excited for and it certainly didn't disappoint. As I flowed on, I could see the most mesmerising creatures dancing below me, like slinky acrobats performing in a circus. I soon became acquainted with the famous Lough Neagh Eels. They guided me across the lough and educated me along the way, explaining that the whooper swans had arrived from Iceland, the flies were a good source of food and the dollaghan trout would soon be heading upstream to spawn.

I thanked them when I reached the Lower Bann, which would lead me eventually to the great Atlantic Ocean. The Lower Bann wasn't without its thrills and spills too. I loved zooming down Patsy's Waterfall. Better than any theme park ride in the world! I zoomed down the drop and dived into the deep plunge pool, caused by the erosion of the riverbed. This proved to be a popular spot for fishermen, hoping to catch salmon for their supper.

Further along the river I couldn't understand why a giant banana would be bobbing around beside me. I think it was some sort of entertainment for those land creatures I know as humans. Canoeing I believe it is referred to. Those humans are dangerous as I quickly learned. I managed a lucky escape from a whack on my head with a paddle. It easily could have been the end of me. The Lower Bann was busy with those humans. Boating, jet-skis, tubing, swimming, paddling - humans and their four-legged friends. I saw it all. I was relieved to get a salty tasty in my mouth, which let me know that the great ocean was looming closer and closer by the second.

A golf ball plopped in beside me, which let me know I was beside Portstewart Golf Club and about to enter the Atlantic Sea at the mouth. This would be the site where my next transformation would take place. As the Spring sun shone down on the surface of the ocean, evaporation took place, sending me back up to the clouds where I started my journey, my safe, comfortable realm awaited me.

As I look back upon my journey, I was so glad that I managed to fall within the watershed of the Bann. As the prevailing winds carry me East, my next hope is I fall within the drainage basin of the River Tay, allowing me to enjoy the longest river in Bonny Scotland.

# History

## *Shared Education Visit to Londonderry*

Year 11 History pupils began their studies for the GCSE course with a visit to Londonderry as part of a Shared Education programme with Holy Trinity College. Pupils had the opportunity to take part in tours of the Siege Museum and the Free Derry Museum.

At the Siege Museum pupils learnt about the Siege of Derry (1688-1689) and its ongoing commemoration by the Apprentice Boys of Derry. While at the Free Derry Museum pupils learnt about Bloody Sunday (1972) and the role this event played in the period of the Troubles.

The trip was informative and interesting and allowed pupils the opportunity to develop their understanding of the history of the city as well as developing their critical thinking and analysis skills while viewing the exhibitions- all of which was of benefit to the pupils as they studied Northern Ireland's history in their GCSE course.



## Pupils had the opportunity to visit the Siege Museum





# Hillsborough Castle Visit



In October Year 9 pupils went on a History trip to visit Hillsborough Castle and Gardens. This castle is a historic royal palace and as such there were many opportunities to learn about the history of this significant building and the role it played in different historic events such as the Plantation of Ulster, the Partition of Ireland and the peace talks towards the end of the Troubles. Pupils had a tour of the castle which allowed them to see the dining room where the Queen herself sat during state banquets, the throne room and the drawing room where discussions were held between key politicians during the time of the Good Friday Agreement. Pupils also explored the beautiful castle gardens to see sights such as Granville Rose Garden, Lady Alice's Temple and the large lake.



## Opportunity to take part in tours of and the Free Derry Museum



# Plantation of Ulster Minecraft Workshop

In January Year 9 pupils had the opportunity to attend a History event at the Hill of the O'Neill in Dungannon run by Mid-Ulster Council. Pupils were able to explore events surrounding 'the Flight of the Earls' and 'the Plantation of Ulster' using digital technology.

Firstly, we had a tour of the site to see why Dungannon, and the site of Hugh O'Neill's fort on the hill, was best suited for defence and an appropriate seat of power at that time due to its vantage point over the surrounding countryside. On the day of the trip, we could see as far as Lough Neagh, the Mourne and even County Louth!

Following the tour, the pupils put their knowledge to use by taking part in a Minecraft workshop with staff from the AMMA Centre, Armagh- an innovative and interesting way to learn about the fort of the O'Neills as pupils were able to recreate the build in Minecraft on the iPads provided.



# History Club

History Club takes place every Monday at break-time in Room 30 and is enthusiastically attended by budding historians from across all year groups. The activities taken part in this year include:

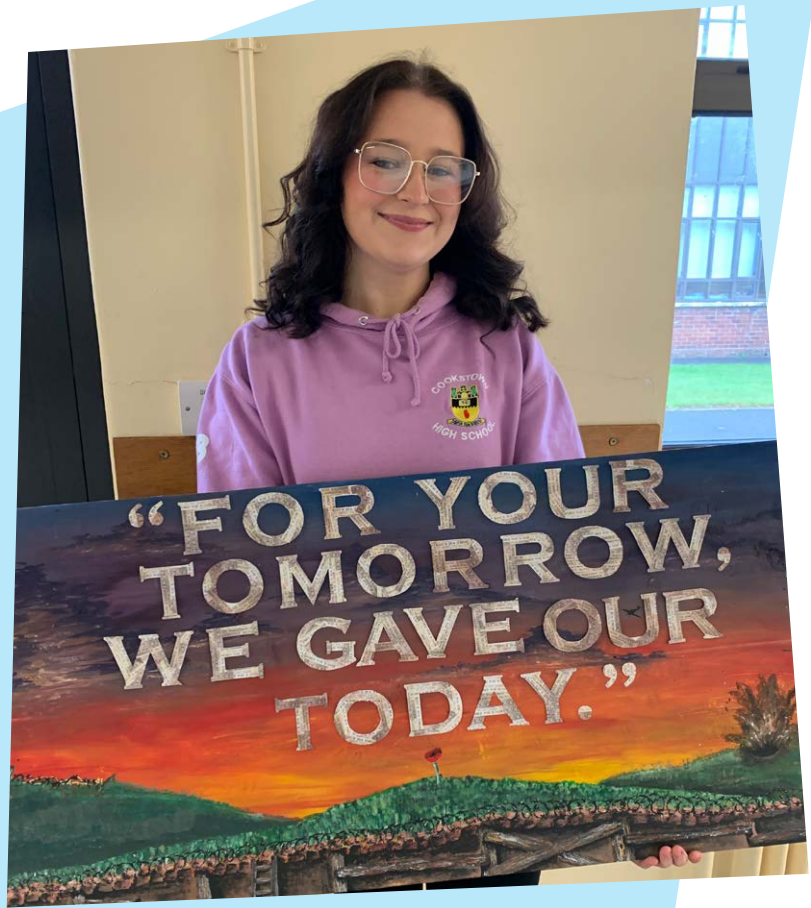
- A study of the First World War in which Year 14 pupils Gareth and Mark recreated life as a soldier explaining why men joined up, life in the trenches and the food available (with hardtack biscuits available for pupils to try). This study concluded with pupils creating a piece of artwork for Remembrance. They intricately assembled lettering which was then stuck to a beautiful painting, very kindly and beautifully, painted by Year 13 pupil Sarah.

- A study of the Holocaust prior to Holocaust Memorial Day. Pupils worked together in a group to brainstorm as many facts as they could about the Holocaust. The pupil's empathy was also very evident as they asked questions and made poignant comments about this tragic period of history. We ended by watching a video by the Holocaust Memorial Trust on the topic.

- TED talks were given by sixth form pupils Leah and Gareth. Leah analysed the merits of the statement 'The Treaty of Versailles was the main cause of World War Two' while Gareth critically evaluated the statement 'This house believes that the past has nothing to teach us about the future' We really enjoyed hearing their well-researched and engaging talks.

- History Club pupils attended a 'D-Day + 80' event at Killymoon Castle to learn more about World War Two and American GIs. The Castle has a unique history linked to these topics. There were military vehicles, Living History demonstrations and an opportunity to tour the castle cellar museum.

- Talks, quizzes and games organised by sixth form helpers whose help throughout this year has been greatly appreciated.



# Home Economics

## A2 level Nutrition and Food Science Research Projects

### To explore the attitudes of households towards food poverty and insecurity and their awareness of the situation

by Molly Carson

My research explored the attitudes of households towards food poverty and insecurity and their awareness of the situation. It considered the UK's current cost of living crisis and issues which have 'fed' its severity including inflation, the Covid Pandemic, unemployment, conflict and Brexit. I established a questionnaire to investigate people's knowledge of food poverty, their concerns and their perceptions of the cause of UK food poverty. I collected data anonymously from 30 participants and correlated, compared and conveyed it in a review. It exhibited facts, figures and feelings on food poverty. Results declared that the public hold the government accountable for a major part of food poverty, including reduced

access to food due to Brexit, soaring food prices due to inflation and an increased population due to their handling of refugee/asylum seekers. Participants believed lack of income and size of families were the biggest challenge, with 60% agreeing that it was not easy to escape the food poverty trap.

When conducting this assignment, I had many opportunities to gain expertise along the way. The main talent I feel I have achieved was organisation; whilst having to focus not only on a deadline but also my other A Level subjects, I had to plan and prioritise around specific deadlines. The experience of completing my research project allowed me to acquire understanding in organisation, independence and literacy skills. Furthermore, I improved my ICT skills, especially within the use of excel. This expansion of knowledge will carry through for countless years to come.

I am ecstatic, elated and excited with my research

project, as I met the deadline early. Furthermore, throughout the process and as my skills developed, I had less corrections at each step of the project; this motivated me to continue to stay patient and determined. I just hope the examiner is as satisfied and thrilled with my work, as much as I am!

On the whole, I enjoyed the task of seeing my improvements throughout each section of my project. As I completed each section, I caught sight of myself developing the new skills mentioned above. Overall, this project helped give me an insight into what I am capable of achieving when I work hard.

As challenging as the task was (completing a research project adhering to the Harvard system of referencing), I thoroughly enjoyed the process of both primary and secondary research on the topic of Food Poverty. As my project came to an end, I not only understand how fortunate I am, but it allows me to appreciate and respect the situations in which other families may find themselves.

### To explore the behaviour and attitudes of families towards food waste in the UK

by Megan Bell

My study explored the behaviour and attitudes of families towards food waste in the UK and its effect on climate change; I chose this focus because existing research indicates that most food waste in the UK stems from households. I formed a questionnaire to explore the behaviour and attitudes of families towards food waste and the impact COVID-19 and the cost-of-living crisis

has had regarding food waste. This was distributed amongst 30 families, for the primary food shopper to complete anonymously. These were returned inside five days. Results showed most participants wasted less than the UK average amount of food weekly, but this could be because the primary research was conducted after another year of the cost-of-living crisis. Many participants expressed a desire to reduce their food waste although lots of barriers prevented them doing this, particularly a lack of time and work commitments. Moreover, the cost-of-living crisis appears to have had a considerable impact on reducing food wastage.

I enjoyed completing this research project, particularly comparing secondary studies with my own primary research findings, as well as getting the opportunity to design my own questionnaire and getting people to complete it. Through completing this research project, I have had the opportunity to develop different skills including ICT skills through forming graphs and charts to include in my project, skills using the Harvard system of referencing throughout my project (which was new to me) and I have also developed my skills in researching secondary sources; I used these in various places throughout my coursework to compare to my own primary research, as well as to gain background knowledge on the topic of food waste.

### To investigate households' attitudes and habits in relation to food security

by Abbie McKirgan

This study investigated households' attitudes and habits in relation to food security, as pre-existing studies brought to light this major present-day issue. Therefore, I assembled a questionnaire in hope of gaining a better understanding of households' views on the security of food, and their habits emerging from this issue. They were dispersed at random amongst 30 households and the respondents returned them anonymously,

after a short period of time. I found that households were mostly unaware of food security and haven't considered the issue previously. Some believed they were food secure (but lacked knowledge on this issue), but when they were made more aware of the matter, they questioned their status of food security. It was highlighted that the participants were now enlightened that they have a part to play, with the majority eager to help/prevent the issue spiralling further out of control, which may be as a result of myself raising awareness of the habits/attitudes connected to food security.

I have gained many skills through completing this assignment including organisation skills while working on my time management in order to meet the assigned deadlines. I even used skills that are involved in the Harvard system of referencing while writing my bibliography. Throughout the study many numeracy and literacy skills were tested with ICT being a dominant factor used, along with researching secondary data sources. Overall, I have greatly enjoyed my research project as it has enabled me to gain many skills and qualities whilst growing in confidence within myself and realising what I can achieve.

# Retirement Congratulations

Congratulations to Mrs Elizabeth Carleton on her recent retirement; Elizabeth was presented with a gift and flowers from the Staff Committee at Easter.

Elizabeth has worked in Cookstown High School for over three decades, most of which were spent in her role as the technician in the Home Economics Department.

Thank you, Elizabeth, for all your dedicated support, loyalty and friendship over all the years. We wish you all the best as you move on to a new chapter, enjoying your retirement with Thomas.

## To explore adolescents' attitudes and behaviours in relation to physical activity

by Alex Neill

My research project investigates adolescents' attitudes and behaviours towards physical activity, as research showed that majority of teenagers are physically inactive, thus failing to meet government guidelines. The research investigated how physical activity could be promoted, as well as barriers that hold adolescents back from participating in exercise. I constructed a questionnaire to investigate adolescents' knowledge on guidelines as well as the benefits of physical activity, and to compare individual's views and behaviours.

The questionnaire was distributed amongst 30 adolescents and handed back after three days in a sealed blank envelope. Results concluded that majority of adolescents had knowledge of government guidelines and benefits of physical activity; however, most adolescents were not

meeting these guidelines due to barriers such as lack of motivation and having insufficient energy due to the demands of school. Many of the adolescents expressed they would like to see physical activity promoted more and that it should be made compulsory in schools and colleges up until the age of 18.

Completing my research project, I gained many skills such as planning and organisational skills so that I could be ahead of my work and have my coursework submitted early, as well as keeping on top of my other subjects. I also had the opportunity to expand my ICT skills by using excel to make graphs and charts for my research project and completing research on my chosen study. When drafting my research project, I furthered my literacy skills as I had to ensure all my work was in the third person past tense and ensure my work was at the highest standard. I also learnt how to carry out referencing using the Harvard System and wrote a bibliography, which is a skill which will be useful to me in the future as I continue my educational studies.

I am incredibly pleased and delighted with my work as I spent a lot of my time on it and prioritised it over some other subjects. I remained determined the whole way through to complete my coursework and continue to make it better as I corrected every draft.

I also am confident as I put a lot of effort and hard work into my research project, to complete it at the highest possible level that I am capable of, and I am confident it will contribute greatly towards my final grade of A Level Nutrition & Food Science.

I found the entire process of my research project thoroughly enjoyable, as I was confident in what I was doing and also got a lot of guidance from my teacher, Mrs Halliday. I enjoyed expanding my own knowledge as I carried out my research, as well as gathering in results from my questionnaire and completing my collated results as some responses were quite eye-opening. I also found the process enjoyable as I stayed on top of my work, which prevented me from being stressed about it.

## To ascertain the effectiveness of Front of Pack Traffic light labelling on consumers' food choices

by Beth Trainor

This study explored the effectiveness of front of pack traffic light labelling and how it facilitates consumers in buying healthy food choices. The primary research indicated that whilst 70% of household shoppers are aware of traffic light labelling, a concerning 30% were not. The author constructed a questionnaire (distributed amongst 30 household shoppers) to investigate the reasons why consumers may not look at traffic light labelling and to evaluate the effectiveness of this system.

After completion within 2 days, participants returned their questionnaires to the author in unmarked envelopes. Results showed that having children is the dominant factor affecting most household purchases, with only 30% of participants declaring that traffic light labelling helps a lot. Although 70% said that they were aware of it, only 30% said they often look at it and this

is mostly because they don't have time to compare food items to the healthiest option (73.3%). Furthermore, 20% said that they would find Nutri-score and 13.3% said they would find health warning labels easier to understand.

By completing this assignment, I developed multiple skills such as time management and organisational skills to ensure that I met deadlines to hand parts in on time. I also developed planning skills when completing this assignment as I had to do a lot of research and plan when to hand out questionnaires etc. Evaluation skills were very important in this project as I had to link and evaluate my primary and secondary research together. Another skill I developed was creating, distributing and collecting a questionnaire, in addition to collating all the results. This assignment taught me how to reference and write a bibliography using the Harvard system, which was tricky at the start, but I finally caught onto it.

I am very pleased with the work I have produced and have met the deadline early. I believe that I have finished this assignment to the best of my ability and if I was to do it again, I don't think I would change anything. As every step of this as-

signment was different in its own way, it kept me motivated throughout.

Overall, I am more confident in what I can achieve as this project has shown me that when you work hard you can achieve what you want. During this assignment I was developing new skills everyday as I have explained above, and this has also made me more confident.

I found collating the results of my questionnaire was the most enjoyable aspect, as it was very interesting to conduct my own primary research and it was intriguing and challenging to compare it to my secondary research, reflecting in some cases on plausible reasons for any difference in results. I also found the research part enjoyable, as it allowed me to extend my background knowledge about traffic light labelling and find out new information.

# GCSE Home Economics: Food & Nutrition Practical Examinations

Congratulations to Year 12 GCSE Home Economics: Food & Nutrition students who completed their three hour practical examinations in November. Pupils had to plan, prepare, cook and serve three dishes and three accompaniments to provide optimal nutrition for a pregnant woman, whilst also showcasing a range of higher and medium level skills.

The Home Economics Department would also like to thank everyone at home for supporting their children whilst practising and preparing for the examination. Here are a selection of photos showing their delicious results! Well done, Year 12!



# Year 10 Swiss Rolls

Year 10 Home Economics pupils focused on developing their higher level practical skills when making Swiss Rolls. Mary Berry would be proud of these swirls!







# ICT

## *NI Cybersecurity Challenge Winners 2023*

Cookstown High School Year 12 students recently emerged victorious in the highly competitive RFCA NI Schools Cyber Challenge 2023 held earlier this term. The competition that was designed to simulate real-world cyber threats, required participants to navigate through complex scenarios and identify vulnerabilities. It was organised by Reserve Forces and Cadets Association NI and was run in collaboration with the NATO Cyber Security team from Belgium, attracting participants from schools across the province.

Amidst stiff competition from 30 other teams, the Cookstown High School team rose to the challenge to rank above some of the top schools in the Province. The team comprised of Year 12 GCSE Digital Technology students, who not only secured the top position but also showcased a collaborative spirit, composure under pressure and demonstrated exceptional problem-solving skills.

Particularly noteworthy is that the school were the 2022 runners-up in this competition and in 2023, triumphed as both category and overall RFCA NI Cyber Challenge Winners.

Miss Evans, expressing delight in the students' accomplishment, stated, that she was 'thrilled that students had the opportunity to participate in such a unique event. The digital world is fast paced and brings enormous opportunities in the future as well as challenges. Students have a deeper appreciation of some of the complexities of the cyber world and the need to continually develop digital and problem-solving skills especially given that it is a growth industry in N Ireland. Students should be proud of their achievements; well done to all involved in the event.'

The Cyber Challenge day not only serves as a platform for students to test their skills but also provides the opportunity to explore further education and career options in the ever-evolving field of Computing, from leading cybersecurity firms and organisations throughout the province.

This year's achievement not only brings success to the school but also raises the bar for future participants, inspiring a new generation of cybersecurity enthusiasts. Congratulations to the talented students on their outstanding performance in the Cyber Challenge.



# Learning for Life and Work CPR TRAINING



*Pupils increased their awareness of how to respond to both conscious and unconscious casualties, how to place someone in the recovery position as well as how to administer CPR.*

Once again our Year 9 pupils as well as all pupils from the Learning Support Centre, took part in CPR Training. Last year was our first year delivering this to Year 9 pupils as the Department of Education made it compulsory for all schools to deliver CPR training at Key Stage 3. This forms part of the delivery of Learning for Life and Work (LLW) where it is a statutory learning outcome that all pupils should develop an awareness of emergency first aid procedures. This is also done in conjunction with the Biology Department who cover the heart in year 9.

All pupils took an active part and learnt many skills focusing on the area of CPR. Pupils increased their awareness of how to respond to both conscious and unconscious casualties, how to place someone in the recovery position as well as how to administer CPR. All pupils had the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice on the resuscitation mannequins. The pupils really enjoyed their session and hopefully now feel more fully equipped to deal with such a situation should they occur in real life.

Pupils were also introduced to AED's (automated external defibrillators) and how these should be used. Our PTFA kindly contributed these training defibrillators last year to enable us to show pupils how they operate.

Well done to all pupils who took part and thank you to Mrs Morrison, as well as the staff from the LSC, for their assistance in delivering this module.





Several LSC pupils triumphed in the Local Credit Union Competition and advanced to compete at the National Level



# Learning Support Centre



The Learning Support Centre has had a remarkable year, marked by numerous pupil successes across a diverse range of subjects and activities.

Several LSC pupils triumphed in the Local Credit Union Competition and advanced to compete at the National Level. A selection of Entry Level Art students had their work chosen for the prestigious True Colours Exhibition.

Pupils embraced new swimming skills at the local Leisure Centre and actively participated in various sports including badminton. They competed with notable success in the IFA Football Competition, Kurling, Boccia, and Bowling events.

The Christmas coffee morning was a highlight, celebrated for its success and the sense of community it fostered.

Pupils honed their gardening and cookery skills, enhancing their practical knowledge. They engaged in money management and personal well-being activities, contributing to their overall development.

The Fit Minds program with Ronan was a favourite, promoting mental fitness and cognitive skills.

School trips provided enriching experiences, including a visit to the Millennium Forum to attend a Pantomime, aligning with the Drama Curriculum. The end-of-year performance of the play "King Henry VIII" saw enthusiastic participation from pupils, watched by family members, staff, and peers. Additional excursions included visits to Southwest College, Northern Regional College, SSE, and Drum Manor Forest Park.

Overall, pupils in the Learning Support Centre have enjoyed a fulfilling year, overcoming challenges and striving to reach their full potential. Congratulations to all for their hard work and achievements!

*The Christmas coffee morning was a highlight, celebrated for its success and the sense of community it fostered.*







## Junior Maths Challenge

The Junior Maths Challenge was held on Thursday 25th April 2024 and everyone in 9CA, CB and CC had a go at the questions in the exam hall. The results this year are extremely encouraging – 22 pupils out of the 75 who were present on the day have been awarded a Bronze, Silver or GOLD Certificate.

An amazing performance came from Dylan Hughes in 9CB who achieved a GOLD certificate as well as being the best in the school.

Silver awards went to Rinaldo Aukstuolis, Eva Curry and Emma-Briana Voicu. Special mention to Rinaldo

who was only one mark away from achieving the Gold certificate.

Bronze awards were achieved by Ross Anderson, Ellen May Bell, Ethan Cowden, Bobbi Fleming, Emily Glasgow, Maisie Hamilton, Daniel Johnston, Luke Johnston, Ruby Kelly, Jack Little, Sarah McKenzie, Isla McLean, Jake Nelson, Daniel Rutcovschi, Rebecca Thom, Rebekah Walker, Nathan Warwick & Matthew Watters!

Well done to everyone for taking part.



Here are examples of some of the Junior Maths Challenge Questions for you to have a try:

- Gill is 36 this year. In which year will her age next be square?  
A 2025 B 2037 C 2047 D 2052 E 2060
- What is the value of  $1 + 2 - 3 \times 4 \div 5$ ?  
A 0.2 B 0.3 C 0.4 D 0.5 E 0.6
- Skye has half as many pens as Isha. Ana has twice as many pens as Skye. What fraction of all their pens does Skye have?  
A  $\frac{1}{3}$  B  $\frac{1}{4}$  C  $\frac{1}{5}$  D  $\frac{1}{6}$  E  $\frac{1}{8}$



## Senior UKMT Maths Challenge



On Tuesday 3rd October 2023, Year 13 and Year 14 pupils studying A level Maths took the Senior Maths Challenge. Over 75,000 pupils from across the UK returned scripts with the top 10% receiving a gold certificate, the next 20% silver and the next 30% bronze. You start with 25 points and gain 4 for a correct answer but lose 1 mark for a wrong answer.

In the space of 90 minutes you have 25 multiple choice questions to tackle which are designed to make you think and sometimes can leave you scratching your head for an answer. It was closely fought between Year 13 and 14 this year with more of Lower Sixth achiev-

ing certificates than in Year 14.

Best performance in Year 14 and Bronze certificate was awarded to Ben Smyton and the same award for exactly the same score in Year 13 went to Sam Purvis. The other pupils achieving a Bronze certificate were:  
Year 14 – Megan Bell, Molly Graham and Katie Kennedy  
Year 13 – Louis Donnelly, Jamie Kerrigan, Peter McLean, Lewis Shepherd & Theo Thompson.

Well done to these pupils on what was quite a tricky challenge this year and hopefully the Year 13 will have another go in Year 14!

# Modern Languages

## *Barcelona 2023*

The excitement was palpable as we journeyed to Dublin airport on our way to Barcelona post-Covid, leaving the country being a first for many of our pupils. Bright and early at 4.30am, Cookstown High fleeces descended upon the Aer Lingus check-in where the NST rep specially opened another desk just for our 23 Spanish linguists. After postponing the trip so many times, Dr Ranchoux and Miss Murphy decided to fly to Spain in October and thankfully avoided the summer heat during our short journey from Llobregat airport to the charming city of Barcelona. We watched as the sun rose high over the hills of the city, surrounded by amazing architecture. We were soon famished and ready to refuel before investigating the city during our four-hour guided tour to make our way to Mount Jouic.



Day one saw us venturing through Park Guell and enjoying the coastal city's scenic views which set an exciting atmosphere for the jam-packed week to come. After an eventful day, we headed to our hotel in Salou where we were joined by another school from Dublin in the quaint Catalan resort just perfect for this time of year. During our stay we learned much from our travel agent provided tour guides- they were from different parts of Spain and spoke excellent English- by the end of the week we had learned many new phrases.

With day two came the much-anticipated Port Aventura theme park visit where pupils could enjoy good food, riveting rollercoasters, and the uncharacteristically warm weather. Proof of life and regular meetups confirmed everyone had good colour in their cheeks after enjoying the rides, the language and the experience! Thankfully- most remembered to put on the agreed sun cream! After venturing many miles whilst exploring the park, day two ended with a happy yet tired and weary bunch making their way back to the hotel. Dinner provided a bit of a rest, rejuvenation, and good food, before we headed out again for bowling at the local arcade.

The next day, we attempted to visit the Picasso Museum only to be turned away as there were too many people! No matter because next up was La Plaza de Catalunya, followed by a walk down Las Ramblas, where a trip to the shopping centre for treats soon lifted our spirits. We then enjoyed lunch at the port boarded a boat for a cruise up the coastline at the Marina. Our small number meant our group never had to split up even as we went up the hills of Barcelona yet again; this time catching the bus out to Cosmo Caixa Science Museum.

With so much to do, not even years of travelling experience could prepare you for the wide range of diverse activities that await you there! From the buildings themselves to their elliptic stairwells and live natural displays of "sea-through" aquariums, (that's a pun!), an action-packed adventure of discoveries awaited us. Our pu-

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pils were soon mesmerised as they explored the workshops and futuristic science displays until the end of day was nigh and it was time to head back to the airport. From the bowling at the arcade to the architectural visits including the Sagrada Familia, our pupils gained invaluable insight into the ever so important cultural, linguistic, and social activities to be experienced. Entertainment, definitely! Formidable, absolutely! A certainly successful trip which included daily journeys to the local shops for some tasty treats enjoyed by both pupils and teachers!

The last of our three days saw a slightly longer bus trip- but well worth it. Traffic is fierce in the capital of Catalunya! Barcelona's spectacular scenery, pretty restaurants and fabulous activities were all well received by our pupils who loved this incredible social experience to create memories, have a laugh and make the most of it all.

The trip flew by, but one of the highlights has to be that our pupils got to enjoy their time together. My thanks go to everyone who helped make this possible, the Office staff and our Modern Language team.

Hasta prontito,  
Dr Ranchoux



# Paris 2024

After five long years, COVID-19 and several lockdowns, Dr Ranchoux, Mrs Allen, Mr Brown and Mrs Thompson accompanied 43 ecstatic Year 9, Year 10 and year 11 pupils as they set off on an experience of, what felt like, a lifetime. A school trip to Paris! Fabuleux, n'est-ce pas?! The build-up to the trip was noticeable, as we anticipated all the magical sights to come not to mention the 'are we ever going to get there?' fear that resonated with everyone amidst all the red tape. Thankfully, after an early start on Thursday 5th April, followed by queuing in Dublin and Charles de Gaulle airports, we were finally à Paris.

Our first scheduled stop at the Stade de France wasn't to be as we battled our way through customs to keep everyone together! Yet, the sun was shining, and soon we were exploring Le Louvres as we admired the beautiful architecture, marvelled at the décor and, of course, saw the much sought after Mona Lisa painting. Afterwards, we enjoyed some time outside in the nearby quarter before we finally sampled some well-deserved local cuisine!

Day one came to a memorable close as we enjoyed the breathtaking night



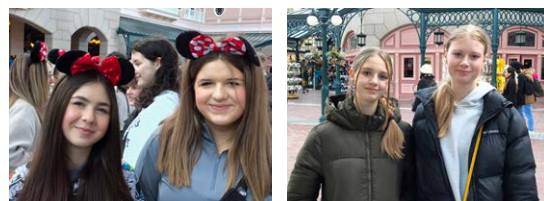
views of la belle capitale and its beautiful landmarks, the Eiffel Tower, La Défense and Notre Dame Cathedral, from the top of the Montparnasse Tower. We soon swarmed the souvenir shop where pupils could find mementos to bring home as well as some bargaining with the staff for bits and pieces which brought the ultimate test of our French! After an action-packed day of excitement, we were ready to relax and settle into our hotel located just outside Disneyland Paris.

The weather continued to be clement to us (another bit of French there!)- and on day 2, after a restful night's sleep, we were greeted with a delicious French breakfast filled with unlimited "croissant au beurre", Nutella, fruit,

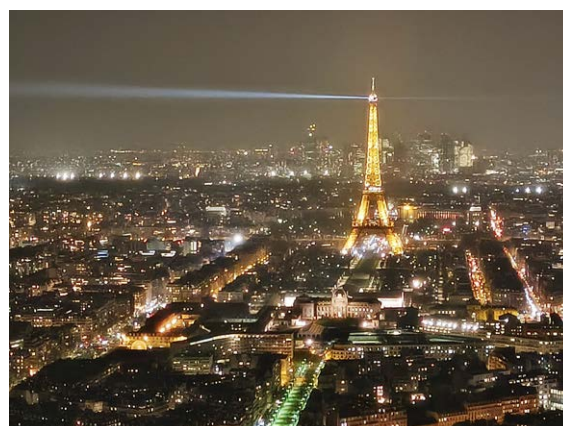
cereals and "jus d'orange". Day 2 started bright and early with a bus full of eager pupils ready to enjoy a Disney-themed day in the park. Once we all were 'let loose' in the resort we rushed to the rides, teachers included! Everyone had a blast! Some of our favourite rides were Thunder Mountain, Space Mountain, and Tower of Terror. it didn't take long until our pupils discovered the souvenir shops- many cuddly toys, keyrings and novelty hats were purchased. No-one certainly went hungry either; the park was packed with too many themed restaurants to pick from! Later in the evening, we met once again for the music show and fireworks. Dr Ranchoux even managed to negotiate some extra time with our bus driver after dinner- the perfect ending to an amazing day!

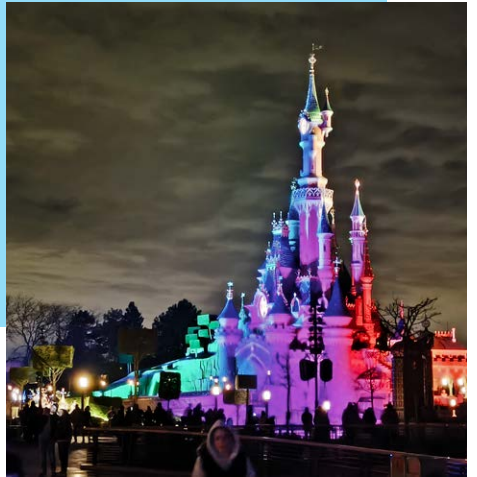
The next morning brought our final day and the almost impossible task of packing all souvenirs into everyone's small suitcases became le défi (the challenge)! Yet we still had lots to see and explore as we enjoyed a trip back into the centre of Paris to meet our walking tour guide. Our tour began near Place de la Concorde and we saw all the city's main attractions: the Jardins des Plantés, the Champs Elysées and the Arc de Triomphe and the Eiffel Tower.

Soon after were boarding our boat trip down the River Seine, gazing at the beautiful scenery during the day on board the Bateaux Mouches after getting to experience the city by night from the Montparnasse Tower was a surreal experience for pupils and teachers alike. As I'm sure we



## The next morning brought the almost impossible task of packing all souvenirs into everyone's small suitcases





would all agree, the most special experience has to be the sight of the Eiffel Tower and its imposing architecture after seeing it from the riverbank.

Finally, after all this hustle and bustle, we were ready for a well-deserved stop in the very chic French McDonald's in Beauvais. Even macaroons were to be found! Miam, miam! After our beautiful boat trip and then enjoying McDonald's and it's golden arches, our pupils took advantage of our final stop in Beauvais airport to do some souvenir shopping. Now rested and refueled, we were ready to head through airport security and finally home.



From Disneyland resort to the most beautiful monuments in Paris, our pupils saw it all with the help of our friendly tour guides. Not to mention the boulangerie, spectacular views and everything else in between. After an action-packed, fun-filled three days in la ville des Lumières (the City of Lights) it seems we were back at the school gates in no time. What an experience for our pupils! One, we hope, they will never forget.

A la prochaine fois, Paris!  
Dr Ranchoux

# Music

## Spring Concert

I am always amazed by the incredible talent of our pupils in the Music Department and the Spring Concert each year is a fantastic opportunity for lots of pupils to step up and perform. This year was the year of surprises, with lots of performances that really astounded me and the audience.

Our concert began with Joshua Bell performing his version of 'Viva la Vida' by Coldplay on piano. This really set the scene and he did a great job. Junior Choir were next up and under the direction of Mrs Blackwood the singers performed 'Touch the Sky' from the film, Brave. Several of the singers also provided musical accompaniment on violin, guitar and cajon. Keeping with the singing, Phebe Davidson then sang a piece she has been working at with her singing teacher in school. She sang 'The Second Star to the Right', a beautiful and sweet song that suited Phebe perfectly.



Every year, pupils come to my room asking to perform at the concert. Lucy Martin and Megan Bell chose to perform 'Living Hope', a song they chose. Lucy played violin while Megan accompanied her on piano.

The next performance was a preview of 'Oliver!' which will be staged in school in October. Pu-



pils who are in Fagin's Gang sang 'Food Glorious Food', complete with some drama included!! Special thanks goes to Gareth Lennox who ably assisted on the night.



It was the turn of the pupils who play in the school orchestra next. These pupils play string and wind instruments and rehearse on a Thursday morning before school. The string players as String Group have played at different functions during the school year, but this was the favourite piece we had learned this year...the theme from James Bond! It was made even better with Sarah Brown playing bass clarinet! The string players then revisited a piece that had been performed at the school's remembrance commemoration in November along with Chamber Choir. This song, 'Holy Spirit' featured a string introduction, before Sarah Fulton sang the first verse on her own.



The mood of the concert was definitely much calmer after this performance.

Hannah Johnston then played one of her piano examination pieces, 'Spanish Polylogorhythms', a complex piece with lots of intricate work between the hands. She did a great job! This was Hannah's first time playing piano at the Spring Concert and if she was nervous, it was unseen! Some of the pupils have performed in groups or

small ensembles in past concerts. Two of these pupils are Annabelle Davidson and Rachel McQueen in Year II. They also asked to play this piece at the concert this year. Annabelle played violin accompanied by Rachel on piano...they played 'Who is She?'. It was absolutely beautiful. The concert at this point was quite reflective and Rebecca McAllister continues this mood with a performance on piano of 'Experience'. This piece is very demanding, but Rebecca played without any music!

Caitlin Kelly had a very successful year in Dunnington Music Festival, and she sang one of her competition songs ('She used to be mine') for an



appreciative audience. It was such a stirring song that showed off the range and flexibility of Caitlin's voice.

Sarah Brown in Year 13 has been involved in Music in school since Year 8. She has been working for her grade 8 in clarinet and she played one of her grade 8 pieces accompanied by Mrs Gormley on piano. The 'Elegie' by Fauré is so emotional and Sarah perfectly captured the composer's mood.

Another pupil who asked to play was Teagan Carson. This was Teagan's last Spring Concert and





she wanted one last chance to play. Self-taught on piano, I was amazed as Teagan's hands flew up and down the piano in a spectacular show of innate talent, as she played 'Yuri on Ice', without a note of music!. This was one of the wonderful surprises of this concert.

The first half was rounded off with another surprise performance. For several months before the concert, the Music Department resonated to the sound of a Year 12 girls rock band. None of these girls had previously played any of the instruments they now stood to play on the night of the concert. With Lois Cunningham on drums, Megan McKay on bass, Sophie Ferson on lead guitar and Niamh Greenstreet on lead vocals, their performance of 'Living on a Prayer' will live long in the memories of all who were there.

After a much-needed interval, we regrouped for the second half. As usual, our concert started again with the pipers. Several of our pipers play regularly in competition and some are Ulster, UK and World Champions in various categories. They were incredible. The tenor drummers continued the Ulster Scots vibe and delivered a clever choreography that was just mesmerising. Quite a number of our girls perform with the Solus School of Highland Dancing and this has now become a regular part of our Spring Concert. Their elegance and nimbleness was beautiful. The final part of the Ulster Scots section was a fabulous tenor drum solo by Year 14 pupil, Megan Bell. Megan had just won in competition with this performance and it was easy to see why she is the best in N. Ireland at what she does!!



Another of the lovely surprise items this year was a piece played by Year 13 pupil, Ben Sweetnam. Ben had never been to a Spring Concert before, never mind play in one. He played a piece on acoustic guitar called 'The Open Road' that was handled so skilfully, he could have been a professional!

Erika Gourley in Year 11 took command at the piano with a rendition of 'Read all about it', a piece that has become part of the soundtrack that I hear everyday in the Music Department. Well done to Erika!!



do a good job again at the Spring Concert. With drums by Kyle Lennox in Year 11 and a solo by Gareth Lennox at the end of the song, it was true family affair! The audience had been very good and were thoroughly enjoying all we offered, but the next item would give them a chance to join in! A Disney medley (Circle of Life, We're all in this together, Hakuna Mata, Supercalifragilisticpealidocious) went down a treat, with the audience joining in for the last song in the set... they did very well indeed!!



Emma Caskey had played the part of Maria in The Sound of Music, and everyone who saw it knew what an incredible voice she has. But this performance was really special. Emma sang the operatic aria 'Habanera' from Carmen (in French by the way!). She didn't know it was one of Miss Evans favourite pieces of music and Emma truly moved the audience emotionally through her singing.

Our evening was nearly over but we would end as we had started. Joshua had set the scene with 'Viva la Vida',

and now Casey Burns, the massed choirs, and the house band of Steve and Trev and Mrs Gormley would shake the walls with a fabulous finale of the very same song.

It was a very special night, full of musical surprises, lots of first times and lots of last times. But a night never to be forgotten!!

Thanks go to all of the pupils, all of the parents and friends who came to support and all staff who helped to make it all happen...THANK-YOU!

Sarah Fulton had also never been to a Spring Concert before, but earlier in the year she had played the role of the Mother Abbess in The Sound of Music and this had given her a taste for more. She sang 'The Prayer', accompanied by Mrs Gormley...so good, it will be heard again on Prize Day.

The Senior Girls' Choir rehearses twice a week and performs at all school functions through the year. This year Mrs Gormley decided to extend their repertoire with a complicated song



# Festival Success

Caitlin had a very successful week at Dungannon Music Festival



Pictured here is Caitlin in Year 11 who had a very successful week at Dungannon Music Festival from 26th-29th February. She is shown here among her certificates, cups and medals.

She performed in seven classes and won five of these, with a second place in the folk song class. She was then invited to perform at the end of festival Gala Concert in recognition of her achievements. The adjudicator complimented Caitlin on her ability to tell a story through song and the bell-like quality of her voice! Well done indeed!!

At the Gala Concert, Caitlin was invited to perform for the Perpetual Cup for most promising young singer! She won this as well!!! What an amazing set of musical achievements!! We are all very proud of her indeed.

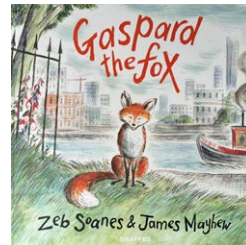




# Music Department Trip



On Saturday 2nd March, a group of 14 pupils travelled to the Waterfront Hall in Belfast for a concert by the Ulster Orchestra, featuring 'Peter and the Wolf' by Prokofiev and a musical interpretation of the book 'Gaspard's Foxtrot' by Zeb Soames. The concert included an artist who created drawings of the characters from both stories while the orchestra performed, and the stories were narrated by Zeb Soames. The afternoon was rounded off with a stop-off for food on the way back to school



# Donation to CAP



Following our very successful Spring Concert, the Music Department made a donation to Christians Against Poverty.

Pictured are Mrs F Gormley (Head of Music), Miss G Evans (Principal), Rachel McQueen, Emma Cahoon, Alison Flanagan from CAP and Jack Suitor.



# My Experiences of Music

## Megan Bell

The Spring Concert is certainly a highlight and the biggest event in the musical calendar at CHS! Preparations begin months before anyone else has probably even thought about it and what a night it was this year. Soloists, choirs, pipe band, highland dancers and string group only scratch the surface as to what took place. This is a night that gives many musicians the chance to perform, and for some of which this could be the very first time they have ever done so. Even though preparations begin months before, the day of the concert involves plenty of final rehearsals, preparations and maybe even the odd last minute bit of panic. There is always a real buzz within school in the days leading up to the Spring Concert as well as on the day, which adds to the atmosphere on the night. Two years ago I jointly led the Pipe

sion of 'Don't Stop Believin', as well as performing it and a solo set on the night.

One of my favourite memories over the last 7 years I've been at CHS has certainly been being involved in the Sound of



There's always something going on in the Music Department. Over my 7 years at Cookstown High School, I have been involved in Pipe Band, Senior Choir, Chamber Choir and I was in the Nun's Chorus in the recent production of 'The Sound of Music'.

Over the course of the year, the Music Department takes part in many different events and performances, both inside and outside of school. This year involved even more than most years and included the Remembrance Service in school, the Sound of Music production, Christmas Carol Service, singing at a Christmas dinner in the Royal British Legion, performing at the Kids with Cancer Charity Concert in the Royal Hotel and last but not least the annual Spring Concert!



Music production in October 2023. It involved plenty of rehearsals and hard work, but it was all so worthwhile as the whole atmosphere, both among the cast and in school in the days leading up to the shows was truly amazing. And let's just say there certainly were some laughs along the way too!

One of my favourite memories from choir this year was when Chamber Choir performed the piece 'Holy Spirit' at the Remembrance Service in October. We were even accompanied by some of String Group as well as Mrs Gormley.

Band for the Spring Concert, even getting to write a tenor drum feature for the night to the song 'This is Me' from the Greatest Showman. This year I wrote another feature to a piping ver-

During my 7 years at CHS I have thoroughly enjoyed being involved in the Music Department and I have been able to not only improve my musical ability, but I have also been able to get to know other people with the same interests as myself, whilst doing something I love. Over the last number of years, I have had many opportunities to play and sing at different events, many of which have created memories which I'm sure will last a lifetime.




# Religious Studies

Year 9  
Faith and Prejudice

### People of Faith

By Isaac McCreary GC

**NAME:** Mahatma Gandhi



**TIME WHEN THEY LIVED/AGE NOW:**  
Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1869. He was born Porbander, Gujarat, North West India.

**WHAT THEY HAD FAITH IN**  
All of his life Gandhi was a committed Hindu who devoted himself to the practice of truth, Non violence, Compassion and kindness.

**HOW THEIR FAITH WAS DISPLAYED**  
Gandhi was always a victim of racism but he believed in Non violent protests. This meant that he would encourage people to protest in a peaceful safe way. He did not want people to get hurt; he just wanted the authorities to notice of how unfair life was for some people.


**THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS**  
Gandhi started a boycott of British goods and went on many hunger strikes to bring attention to the unfair treatment of the Indian people at the hands of the British. He was sent to jail for two years but the British agreed to make some changes to the lives of poor people. Gandhi encouraged people to stand up to the government. Gandhi's most significant achievement was his life long struggle for India's freedom. On August 15<sup>th</sup> 1947 his dream became a reality. His faith in honesty, tolerance and self sacrifice, made history by peacefully demonstrating and ending India's freedom.

**OTHER INFORMATION**  
Some people did not agree with him and tried to kill him. Gandhi died on his way to a prayer meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1948. He was shot in the chest 3 times by Nathuram Godse.

*You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.*  
- MAHATMA GANDHI

### Lewis Hamilton

**Name:** Sir Lewis Carl Davidson Hamilton  
**Born:** 7<sup>th</sup> January 1985  
**Age:** 39 Years Old  
**Job:** A British racing driver, currently competing in Formula One. He drives for the Racing Team Mercedes.




**Achievements:**  
Hamilton has won seven world Drivers' Championship titles. He holds the records for the most wins (103), most pole positions (104) and most podium finishes (197).

**Faith:**  
Sir Lewis Hamilton has a strong Christian faith. He grew up in a devout Christian family. He prays before every race, firmly believing that God guides and protects him throughout and his faith helps to motivate him and keep him striving for success.

Hamilton's faith is obvious through his fair play attitude and his respect for his fellow competitors. He shows his faith through his community involvement and his charitable actions. He often donates to food banks, supports education and contributes to disaster relief.

**Other Interesting Information:**  
Lewis Hamilton has several tattoos. Many of these are religiously themed. For example, he has the words 'God is Love' tattooed on the left side of his neck. He also has a cross tattooed on his back which symbolises his unwavering faith. Finally, Hamilton has the tattoo of a compass on his chest. This shows the sense of direction and purpose he gains from attending church every Sunday and he also sees it as a spiritual compass that guides him through his life and on the race track.




Lucy Bayne 9CC

### EMBRACING DIVERSITY: FIGHTING UNFAIRNESS AND BUILDING A WELCOMING COMMUNITY!

- What is discrimination?**  
- Sometimes when people move to a new place, they face unfair treatment just because they're different.
- This unfairness can take many forms, like mean comments, exclusion from groups, or even being denied opportunities like jobs or housing, all because of where they come from.
- It's not right because everyone deserves to feel accepted and respected, regardless of their background or where they've moved from.
- What we should do.**  
Speak Out: Don't stay silent when you see someone being treated unfairly. Use your voice to stand up against discrimination and support those who are being mistreated.
- Education**  
Educate Yourself and Others: Take the time to learn about different cultures and perspectives. Share what you learn with your friends and classmates to promote understanding and acceptance.
- Challenge**  
Challenge Stereotypes: Don't let stereotypes or prejudices go unchallenged. Speak up when you hear someone making unfair assumptions about others based on their background or nationality.

## MIGRANTS AND DISCRIMINATION IN THE UK

Migrants may experience discrimination for different reasons, some of which also affect UK-born ethnic minorities. This can be due to characteristics such as ethnicity and race, but also factors that particularly affect the foreign born, such as having a foreign accent or foreign qualifications.




In 2016-2018, the share of migrants perceiving discrimination against their group was similar in Great Britain (16%) to in other EU-14 countries (17%). Among children of migrants, however, the share perceiving discrimination was higher in the UK than in other EU-14 countries (32% vs. 21%).

The majority of the foreign-born population (72%) think that the UK is hospitable or welcoming for migrants, and that migrants can get ahead if they work hard (91%).

About 13% of the foreign-born population said that they had been insulted because of their ethnicity, nationality, religion, language or accent.

Both British and international evidence suggests that ethnic minorities are discriminated against in hiring decisions irrespective of the country in which they were born or received their education.



In 2018, non-EU born migrants were over twice as likely to describe themselves as members of a group that faces discrimination because of nationality, religion, language, race or ethnicity, compared to EU-born migrants (19% vs. 8%). However, there was a sharp, temporary increase in EU migrants' perceptions of discrimination around the time of the EU referendum, in 2014-16.

Adult children of migrants who were born in the UK are much more likely to perceive discrimination against their group than migrants themselves (32% vs. 16% in 2016-18).

### WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN FIGHT AGAINST PREJUDICE IN SCHOOLS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS ...

- Challenging negative attitudes amongst people
- Avoiding stereotypes in curricular resources and examples
- Setting clear rules regarding how people treat each other
- Treating everyone no matter what their background or ethnicity with equality and fairness

## Prejudice and discrimination UK

**What is it?**  
Prejudice is to have a certain attitude towards an outcast.  
Discrimination is to take action against these outcasts.

**SAY NO TO RACISM**

**Examples**  
Black people. Black people are greatly discriminated against everywhere in the world. This is because their skin is different colour to most and they are of different race. However, they should be treated fairly as they are just normal people as well. A lot of the world wants this as well. A couple of years ago, the whole thing called 'Black Lives Matter' started up because of an incident. People protest against this all the time.

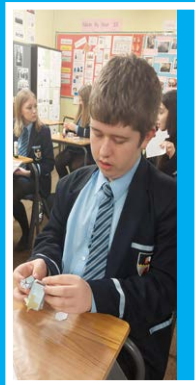
**How is this prejudice and discrimination?**  
For a start, remember, prejudice is certain attitude towards someone, a lot of people have an attitude for black people because they aren't fan of just their skin. Discrimination is taking action. People are making black people outcasts.

**How to help.**  
How do we stand against discrimination? We could make a complaint against the people that are discriminating at us. The civil courts will help. You could support someone being left an outcast, perhaps if you see them at school or in the town. If someone is holding prejudice against you, you can tell them to stop or tell someone important.

**DISCRIMINATION**

# Learning about Islam

As part of their study into Islam, Year 10 pupils learned about the mosque, which is the Muslim place of worship. They built models of mosques, which include the main prayer hall, the tower or minaret and the domed roof.



## Learning about the Hajj

As part of their study of Islam, Year 10 pupils learned about the Hajj or pilgrimage that a Muslim will try to make, at least once in their life. They were given the task of completing a piece of creative writing, that incorporated the facts about Hajj, whilst trying to also convey the atmosphere and feelings of a person completing the pilgrimage.

15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### RELIGIOUS NEWS!

#### My Hajj Experience

I had the best time ever at the Hajj last year, despite the weather being absolutely boiling. Knowing it would be hot, I was sure to pack sunscreen, the clothing and plenty of water. I was just about able to pay for the top three because my manager had been saving up since my first paycheck and there was no doubt that it was worth every penny. It was very important to me that I made the pilgrimage because it was the six pillars of Islam. It didn't my spiritual world when I got to Mecca. I see the Kaaba that behind the words of our religions writing. I paid for and went around it seven times as a tradition. I saw men sitting there for they do this so that they can get closer to Allah. The symbols and prices that they do not care about their actual appearance.

Things of the world but only care about their actual appearance (the Allah was them). We all had to wear special white clothes so that all people were equal. It also made it believe how exciting it was to see so many Muslims in one place. All praying Allah it was an experience. I will never forget and I remember giving the Hajj picture!

Excellent

RE DAILY MAIL

#### THE HAJJ - An exciting, exhilarating & exhausting journey

The Hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca, the holy city in Saudi Arabia. This religious journey is taken once in a Muslim's lifetime. We have interviewed a Muslim on their journey to Mecca. It was an exciting, exhilarating and exhausting experience. In preparation to save a lot of money, I took me many years to afford it. Money wasn't the only thing, it also had to be a special gift. My family had to be involved, money, miles and I wanted to make sure I could give a my all to my God. Allah. I wore a white dress and the rain water on them. It was so everyone is equal. The atmosphere was absolutely incredible. There were roughly 3.5 million Muslims there, all worshipping Allah. It was very powerful and it was really scary. The heat was awful and the hard concrete my feet was really and we had made it very hard to walk out.

Everyone supported each other and kept encouraging. The reason I wanted to complete the Hajj was, I felt it is my duty and it was an amazing way for me to show my faith. I felt with my best friends, it is all we had ever talked about and all we are talking about. Before the more exciting part was building the Kaaba. It was the first time built to worship Allah. Are you a Muslim? Make the journey today!

Enjoy the work!

SEARCHED, MARKDOWN TEXT DATE: 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022

### The MUSLIM Life

#### The day in a life as a Muslim at Hajj

Hello, My name is and what you are about to read is my life at Hajj. For us Muslims the Hajj is known as a religious journey or a pilgrimage. We call it this as it is a journey to the Holy City in Mecca (Saudi Arabia). Usually, this is only undertaken once in a Muslim's life time.

Before me and my family went to the Hajj, my father always said this: "He does this to show that he is close to Allah. The other reason why he did this was so everyone is equal and that they don't worry about their appearance. We all had to dress in white clothes, that is called an Ihram. My father says this is so we are all equal and so you don't know the difference between the rich and the poor."

What the women dress like when going to the Hajj

What the men dress like when going to the Hajj

One other thing that we do is we sacrifice a sheep. This reminds us that they must give up anything for Allah.

My parents say anyone can go on the Hajj but they need to check three things first:

1. They are able to look after themselves.
2. Healthy and fit to go.
3. They can afford it.
4. To finish all and I hope you enjoyed my day in Hajj.

# Learning about Judaism

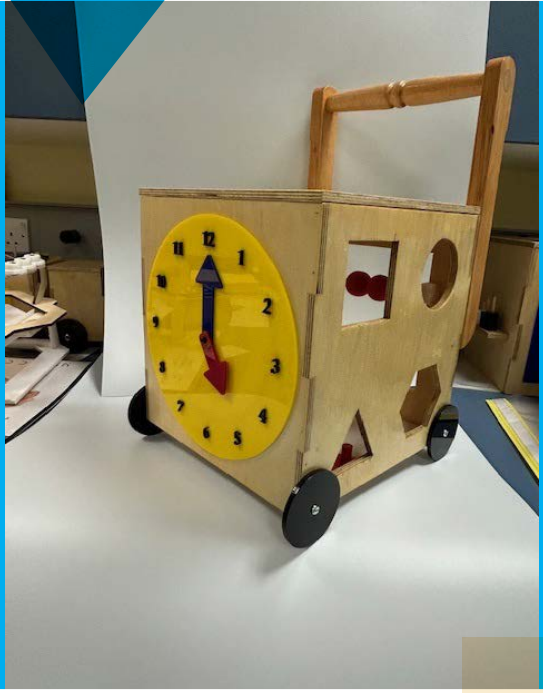


## *Logos Ministries International visits the Religious Studies Department*

LMI is an interdenominational evangelical Christian mission organisation that was founded in 1977. Their work covers a wide range of initiatives, which are impacting lives in many countries around the world. Their motto is: We want the world to know Jesus.

Logos Ministries International spent two days with our Year 10 and 12 Religious Studies pupils. The pupils learned about persecution of Christians around the world.





# Technology



# The Sound of Music

## The real story of Maria and the von Trapps

It seems everybody has seen the film *The Sound of Music* at least twice – even if they don't care to admit to it! Before it became the highest-grossing film in the history of the cinema, *The Sound of Music* was, despite reviews, a most successful stage musical, chalking up OM a four-year run on Broadway, and an even longer run in the West End where it set new records. And before that, it was, of course, a true story.



*The Sound of Music* is remarkably faithful to actual events, and of its principal dramatis personae only the roles of 'Uncle' Max and Rolf are fictitious. Maria Kutschera (her mother's maiden name was Rainer) was born on a train in the Tyrolean alps in 1905. Two years later, her mother died of pneumonia and by the age of nine Maria was an orphan – compounding an already unsettled childhood. By her early teens she had developed into a headstrong, hearty tomboy, and at the earliest opportunity she left the Tyrol for Vienna where she studied at the State Teachers' College. It was in Vienna that Maria discovered the two forces that shaped her character and changed her life irrevocably – music and God.

As soon as she had completed her training at the age of eighteen, Maria joined the strictest order of Benedictine nuns she was able to find – the ancient Nonnburg Abbey in Salzburg. Despite distinguishing herself as a fine teacher of the convent children, Maria was something of a wayward postulant, prone to whistling in the cloisters and praying in the mountains rather than the abbey. The Reverend Mother Abbess felt that Maria needed a little more 'life experience' before becoming a nun and so, in response to an earlier enquiry, sent her on a temporary assignment as a governess (the twenty-sixth in only four years!) to one of the children of the widowed Baron von Trapp.

Georg von Trapp served in the navy and, while a Captain, met and married a beautiful young heiress, Agatha. The couple had seven children and



live in some splendour in Pola on the Adriatic coast in the final days of the Hapsburg Empire. During the First World War, the Captain's bravery earned him many decorations and a title, but in 1918, Austria was defeated and the Imperial navy was decommissioned. Having lost his vocation, three years later he would lose his wife to an epidemic of scarlet fever. The Captain left Pola immediately and took his children to a vast estate at Aigen on the outskirts of Salzburg. It was here, in October 1925, that Maria arrived and was introduced to the Captain's seven sailor-suited children. The eldest was a boy, Rupert, then Agathe, Maria, another boy Werner, Hedwig, Johanna and Martina. The Captain was an aloof father and the children, while not unloved, were certainly unhappy.



Given her own neglected upbringing, Maria took to the motherless children instantly and they to her – especially as she encouraged them to play in the grounds and introduced them to the joys of singing and music-making. One evening the Captain, upon returning from Vienna where he had developed an attachment to an Austrian Princess, was so overcome by the sound of his children singing that he dusted off his violin and accompanied them. The sound of music did therefore bring him closer to his children once more, and to their governess. Eventually, in 1927, Maria and Georg married in Nonnberg Abbey – not before Georg had untangled himself from an awkward situation with Princess Yvonne in Vienna.

In 1938, the Nazi occupation of Austria (the Anschluss) shattered the Von Trapps' harmony. Returning from a trip to Munich, where, curiously Georg and Maria had sat in a restaurant at a table

adjacent to Hitler's, the Captain and his eldest son were confronted with telegrams offering them new positions away from Salzburg – in the navy, and their health service respectively. Unwilling to collaborate with the new authorities, the cabled their refusals. Shortly afterwards, a third telegram arrived 'inviting' the family to perform at Hitler's official birthday celebrations. There was no response to this telegram. As Georg wisely demurred one did not say 'No' to Hitler three times. Within twenty-four hours they had fled their home and their homeland. They did not hike over the mountains to Switzerland (some one-hundred-and-fifty miles west of Salzburg!), but instead drove the much shorter distance southwards to Italy. Whilst there were no Nazis in hot pursuit, their escape was nevertheless knife-edged, for the following day the borders were closed.

Once in Italy, they sailed to London, and then, in September 1938, they arrived in New York where they began their first American tour.

When war was declared in Europe, the family were imprisoned by the US authorities for a short time on suspicion of being undesirable. By now the von Trapps were no strangers to adversity or sacrifice, and from this low point they went on to become one of the most successful choirs in the United States – where they toured exhaustively – and abroad.

Georg died in 1947 of heart complications. The family continued to tour and, in 1950, made and emotion, but brief, return to Salzburg – although they did not visit their precious villa. During the war, Hienrich Himmler, the architect of the Jewish holocaust, used the house for a time as his headquarters, entertaining Hitler there on numerous occasions.

Baroness Maria von Trapp died in 1987. Most of her children and stepchildren are still living.

### The Sound of Music Review

Music by Richard Rodgers / Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II / Book by Howard Lindsay and Russell Crouse

In October 2023, over 70 pupils from Cookstown High School staged Rodger and Hammerstein's classic musical 'The Sound of Music'.







Cookstown High School has long since held a reputation for performing classic musicals and after six years it was fantastic to revive the tradition.

The tuneful, heart-warming story is based on the real-life story of the Von Trapp Family singers, one of the world's best-known concert groups in the era immediately preceding World War II.

Over the past few months students and staff had been busy rehearsing. Every spare moment during school and in the evenings, lines were being learned, music being played, and costumes being fitted. As the show grew closer, so did the excitement which had been building for the final few months.

Over the course of three nights students performed to a sold-out Millar Hall.



The atmosphere was fantastic, and friends and family members took their seats. It was also great to see some former students coming along to support the school. Some even shared their memories of taking part in previous shows when they were pupils! When the lights dimmed, and

the band started playing, the audience were immediately transported to Austria.

First up was the Girls' choir, angelically singing like the 'Morning Hymn' at Nonnberg Abbey. We then moved to the mountainside where Emma



Caskey sang the iconic number 'The Sound of Music' – memories of Julie Andrew's singing the song from a mountaintop in Vienna came flooding back. One of the most-famous scenes, where the Captain announces his children using a whistle, drew laughter from the audience. Act One finished with Sarah Fulton blowing the roof off the auditorium with her belting rendition of 'Climb Every Mountain' – a song only dared sung by the brave.

Tea was served during the interval and some audience members were heard talking about watching the Oscar winning film every Christmas holiday. Others had the songs 'Do, Re, Me' and 'My Favourite Things' stuck in their head.



The audience were buzzing and some even joined in singing 'The Sound of Music' for the finale! Many students had never performed on stage in their lives, and it was incredible to see students'

confidence and talents in both acting and singing come to light.

Emma Caskey, who played Maria, remarked: "Playing Maria has been a brilliant experience. I have loved every second since we started rehearsals in January. I love singing and it was fantastic being on stage with everyone!"



Captain Von Trapp, played by year 14 pupil, Timothy Clarke said: "It was exciting to be part of such an iconic show. It was a little nerve-wracking but I've been looking forward to it since we started rehearsals back in January. I love the show and it's been very enjoyable to be part of. Learning the lines and songs has been interesting, but I got there in the end."

Year 9 student Ava Graham said "I cannot wait for the next one! I've loved every second of it!"

An unforgettable evening was had by everyone in attendance, and it was brilliant to see Cookstown High School revive their iconic school musical.



*They were soon covered in a variety of different colours from some over-zealous staff*



# Colour Run

Wednesday 19th June saw our pupils take part once again in our annual Colour run. The Colour run saw 190 pupils and staff walk, run, jog and dance their way around the playing fields while being doused in a rainbow of vibrant colours.

The weather was glorious which just added to our enjoyment. The event started with a dance warm up before the participants set off in their pearly white t-shirts. The t-shirts didn't remain like this for long as they were soon covered in a variety of different colours from some over-zealous staff. Pupils and staff finished off their run with a

well-deserved treat from Paul's Ice Cream Van and sat on the grass bank to enjoy the sunshine and their ice cream.

As well as having fun, a fantastic amount was raised for our school funds and this year's chosen charity – The Mid Ulster MS Society.

We would like to thank everyone who took part in the Colour Run and to all parents and friends for sponsoring our pupils. Thanks also to our staff for their assistance to ensure the event ran smoothly.





*Such a tight game! 1-1 at full time but the students narrowly edged it in the penalty shoot-out*



# Staff Vs Year 14 Charity Football Match





# ABP Angus Youth Competition

*Once again Cookstown High School had a really fantastic run in the ABP Angus Youth Competition*

All three groups produced excellent entry videos, promoting a range of farm related topics, from farm safety to sustainability. Their hard work paid off with unprecedented success: all three groups made the semi-finals in the Eikon Centre!

There, they thoughtfully set out their stalls and, I think it's fair to say, our 'part time farmers, full time charmers' wowed the judges. Several of them commended the groups on their design, friendliness, willingness to speak and share and passion for farming.

Sadly, the competition was hard fought, and our groups were unable to progress to the final. However, they all did us proud at Cookstown High School. Well done to Cameron Cahoon, Aaron Brown, Harry Watters, Leah Allen, Kellie Harkness, Pippa Coulter, Erika Gourley, Connie Mei McGarvey, Lilu Creighton, Laura-Louise McCrea and Taylor Hessin.

We look forward to continued success in this competition next year.

Mrs McMurray and Mr Agnew



I think it's fair to say, our 'part time farmers, full time charmers' wowed the judges.



# Junior Scripture Union

*Psalm 32:8 -*

*"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;  
I will counsel you with my loving eye on you."*

Junior Scripture Union continues to meet twice weekly, and through a wide range of activities, we provide opportunities for young people to explore the Bible, respond to Jesus and grow in faith.

Teaching young people the word of God is the only way of preparing them to make the most important



decision of their lives—where they will spend eternity. The writer of the book of Proverbs came to understand this important truth and he said, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Our young people are growing up in a world of ever increasing challenges and they have difficult choices to make. Teaching Bible truths provides them with clear standards, on which to base their lives and decisions. Our desire is to teach those who attend Scripture Union in the way of truth, as presented in the Word of God. What a privilege it is to be able to encourage young people to open up the Bible, allow them to explore it for themselves and help them understand what is being read.



Our main meeting, which is held each Tuesday at break-time, continues to be well attended by Year 8, 9 and 10 pupils, and we give thanks to God for their faithful commitment to SU. Our meetings consist of Bible based talks, quizzes and activities, organised by staff, guest speakers and pupils. Every Thursday at break-time, pupils meet for toast and a prayer time in Mr Johnston's classroom. We have organised trips and events including our annual Christmas party and a trip to the North Coast in the summer term.



The SU Team



*The Dutch students joined some of our Year 10 classes and took part in their first ever Colour Run*







# Dutch Visit

During June, we had the privilege of hosting five pupils from a school in The Netherlands for the week!

This is the second time we've hosted an exchange with this school and just like last year, the pupils were a delight to host and our pupils thoroughly enjoyed welcoming them to Cookstown High School.

At the start of the week, the pupils enjoyed a 'Pizza and Games' evening hosted by the Senior Scripture Union. On Tuesday they visited various spots in Belfast- including Stormont, Titanic Quarter, City Hall and Queen's University Belfast.

During the following days, they joined some of our Year 10 classes and took part in their first ever Colour Run! On their final day, they took a trip to the North Coast, where some of our Year 10 and 11 pupils showed them the sights of The Giant's Causeway. The trip ended with a game of rounders on the beach, a dip in the sea and a Morellis ice cream on the way home.

It was a pleasure to host such polite pupils and throughout the week our pupils made them feel extremely welcome.





# Future Ready

*Pupils have been reflecting on what their purpose is, in terms of harnessing their individual skill*

Cookstown HS has been very fortunate to have had funding support from McAleer Community Foundation. This has been put to positive and active use in school, for pupils who often lack motivation and engagement and for whom school can be an uphill struggle.

Mr Mark Stuart began the work in Jan 2023 and we quickly saw results from their collective labour, with beautifully crafted planter boxes, providing a riot of colour in spring 2024. HE initiated fruitful community connections with MUVE, bringing practical skills to life for pupils as well as Kildress Rectory Lodge Fishery, where pupils gained entry qualification in fly fishing (and a valuable lesson in patience and quiet!).

We were absolutely gutted when the time came for Mr Stuart to head off to Co Galway (the perks of being the rector's husband!) to pursue new challenges. The quandary for CHS was how would we keep the progression and continuity for the pupils on the Future Ready Programme?

It was with delight (and relief in equal measure!) when Mr Jason Martin, ably assisted by Mr Ivor Faulkner, expressed their interest in taking up the mantle. Jason has a passion for empowering young people, through whatever vehicle possible, to engage in their education and embrace the opportunities and skills they have at their fingertips.

Soon Jason started with a programme of car maintenance for the KS4 pupils, in a bid to

better prepare them for a lifetime of safe motoring. Also, in an effort to ensure safer drivers of the future, they began with a car handling showcase in the form of an Auto-test demonstration. These pupils also had some basic car maintenance demonstration work. The KS3 pupils embraced the challenge of environmental sensitivity and had a presentation on protecting the natural habitat of bats, culminating in making bat boxes, in association with the volunteers in MUVE.

Since Easter, pupils have been reflecting on what their purpose is, in terms of harnessing their individual skill, being an active participant in school and the local or wider community. They have engaged in 'hands on learning' and been asked to consider how this would tie in with their school studies. They have focused on mastering the basics, even able to iron a shirt, sew on a button and polish their shoes. If we don't encourage our youngsters to take pride in themselves, there's little hope they will be able to replicate pride and loyalty to their local area.

We are very excited to see how the new year progresses.

We have plans to ~~operate an August activity~~ programme, including getting children to be "school ready" for September, whilst enjoying some team building and active learning.

We are very pleased to offer this pastoral support in Cookstown HS and hope this will ensure our pupils have the transferable skills for the future.

# TED Talks

## Sarah Fulton

Hi, my name is Sarah Fulton and I was presented with the opportunity to deliver a TED talk to my peers this year. At first, I wasn't going to do it as I thought that it would take up too much of my time. However, last minute I changed my decision and decided to participate. My subject was Art, and my debate title was "Should All Good Art Have A Message". I thoroughly enjoyed researching my topic and creating my presentation on it. On the day of the TED talks I was very nervous but after calming my nerves and presenting my talk, I became more confident in myself and in public speaking. I think something that also helped me was being involved in the Career Ready programme through school, where we practice public speaking and growing our confidence. I would definitely now encourage pupils in Year 12 to participate in the TED talks next year!



## Anna Millar

My name is Anna and I completed my TED Talk on 'Is the selective breeding of pedigree dogs unethical?' This topic really challenged me to think about other perspectives whilst also learning lots of shocking statistics. Researching for my TED Talk and then compiling all the information into a 5 minute talk was really quite difficult! I genuinely loved doing my TED Talk and it was something I became rather passionate about. After many hours of drafting, editing and practicing it, it finally came to the dreaded day of presenting it!! Listening to my fellow students delivering their presentations was so eye-opening. The range of topics, to points to ponder over, matched with the high level of knowledge and detail really was something I am proud to have witnessed and have been a part of. I highly recommend doing the TED Talk because it is such an invaluable tool and I have learnt so many things doing it!!



# Iceland

*In February 2024 a number of pupils from Year 9 to 11 travelled to Reykjavik, Iceland*

On the first day we had an early start to travel to Dublin airport to catch our flight to Keflavik international airport. Once our tour guide collected us we made our way to the Blue Lagoon in Grindavik, where an active volcano had erupted less than a month prior. It was such a surreal experience being in a geothermal pool with speckles of snow falling. Next we headed to Reykjavik where we were staying, that evening we then went on a walk along the coast, which quickly turned into a snowball fight.

On the second day we were up bright and early as we were headed to the Hellisheiði Power Station which is the eighth largest in the world and the largest in Iceland. We then went to Kerid volcanic crater and even got to see



the sunrise on the way there. It was strange seeing the sun rise so late in the morning. Afterwards we went to see the Great Geysir and got to see it spewing boiling water high up into the air. The Gulfoss waterfall was next on our agenda it was so mesmerizing seeing the waterfall break through the ice at such speeds. Next we visited Pingvellir National Park. The park lies in a rift valley or the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and the boundary between the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates. To its south lies Pingvallavatn, the largest natural lake in Iceland. It was amazing to touch the wall of the North

American Plate and also see how this area is pulling in two different directions. On our way back to our hotel we stopped of and saw some Icelandic horses which we got to pet and feed. Finally we made it back to the hotel for some much needed rest but as if we didn't see enough we managed to capture the northern lights along the sea front of Reykjavik. During the day we had the most perfect weather, that even our tour guides were taking photos of the scenery.

On the third day we departed for our sight seeing round Reykjavik. Firstly we visited Hallgrímskirkja cathedral which gave us the most amazing view over all of the city. We then went down by the lake which was frozen over and also had a snowman building competition. We also had free time to explore the City Centre and of course shop. In the evening we then headed to Laugardalslaug geothermal swimming pool, this complex had a large pool with slides, Jacuzzi's, steam room and sauna. It was a great way to spend time with friends after a very busy day exploring.

On the final full day our tour guides Anna and Thor picked us up again and took us to Skogafoss Waterfall and then the famous Reynishverfi (black beach). The Black Beach was spectacular with powerful waves and the classic eroded headland. Then we travelled to Seljalandsfoss Waterfall, we weren't able to climb to the top of the waterfall as the steps were too icy. Lastly we got to see Myrdalsjökull Glacier which is 30 miles long and 20 miles wide and is even still currently moving. It was amazing to see the blue

It was such a surreal experience being in a geothermal pool with speckles of snow falling.





colour of the ice at the snout of the glacier. This was such an unforgettable experience. My favourite part had to be the blue lagoon by far as it was such a great experience.



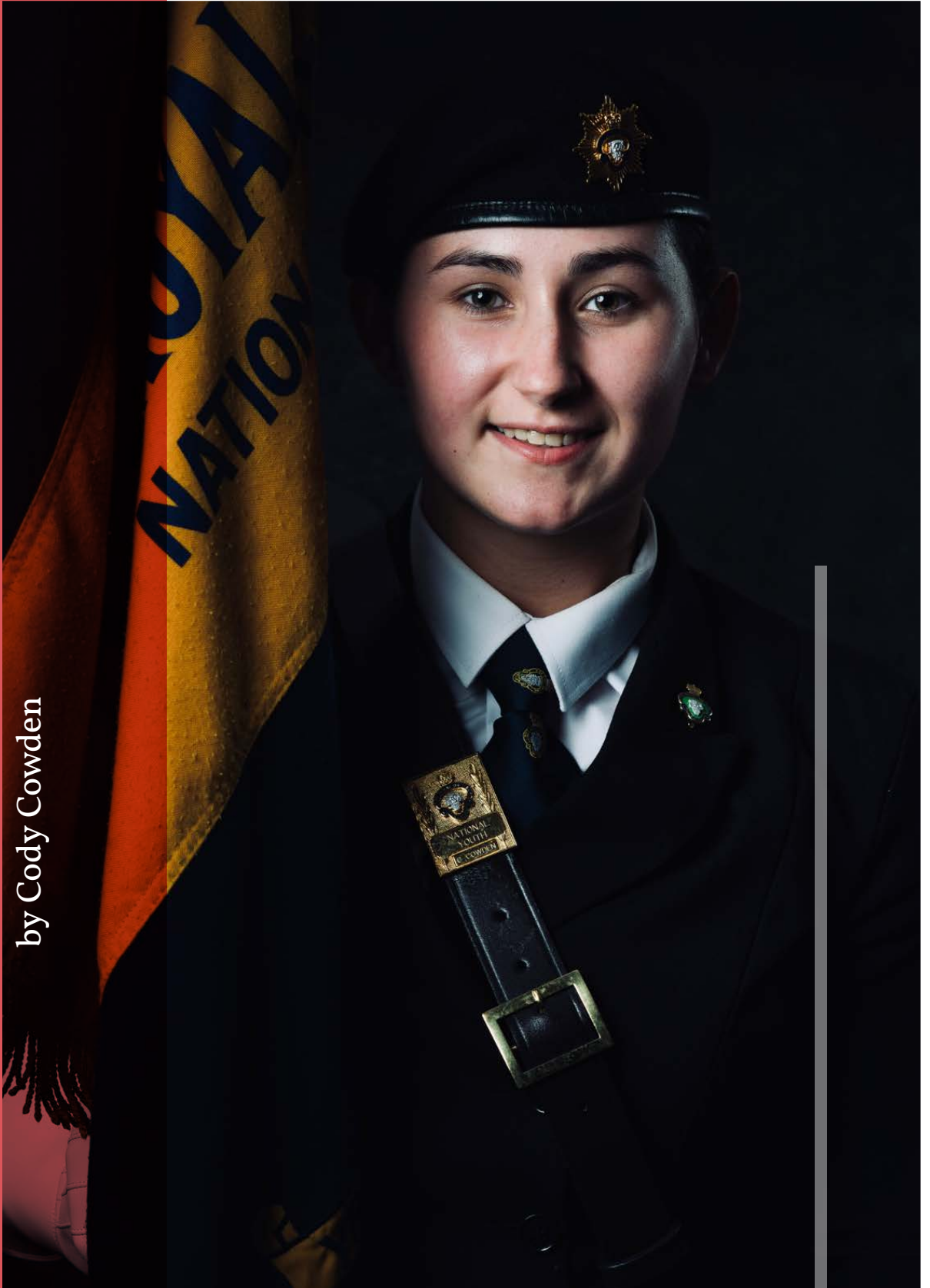
This was the trip of a lifetime. It was such an experience to see a place so different from our own, how they go about their lives in such extreme conditions. We were fortunate to get to the Blue Lagoon, as the volcano beside it erupted the day after we flew home, as a result the blue lagoon was closed.

By Rebecca McGeown



# My Experience as a National Youth Standard Bearer

by Cody Cowden



From a young age of 13 years old I had been training to become a standard bearer for the Royal British Legion. My training sessions would take place locally in the Cookstown Royal British Legion branch, within these training session I was taught how to perform the drill movements, how to march and how to act within competitions or events.

## Youth standard bearer competition

On the 9th of April I flew to Stockport, England to compete against 4 other individuals for the title of 'National Youth Standard Bearer'. This competition consisted of me being scored out of ten

on twelve different movements and being scored out of ten on three different sections of my uniform, the total amount in which I could have scored out of was 150. The final result was close between me and the runner up.

## The Queens Funeral

Due to me winning this competition I was made aware that if Queen Elizabeth II was to pass away within the year of me being the national youth standard bearer I would be given the honour and privilege of being a part of the funeral procession. On the 7th of September it had been confirmed that Queen Elizabeth II had passed away. This came to me as a massive shock, it felt

physically impossible that I would be a part of the funeral at all. The initial email was called 'RBL OPERATION LONDON BRIDGE' and it stated I was not allowed to tell anyone about the funeral.

The day had come when I would be flying out to London, it still did not feel real at all. This was an exciting yet nerve wrecking experience as I knew any mistake or facial expression made would be documented live and broadcasted to every country in the world. There were 100 of us in total participating in this funeral procession, as soon as we all got to the hotel we were briefed by the National Parade Marshall on what we would have to do, where we would be placed and our itinerary for the week. We were then told that we had to do overnight rehearsals. I did not expect it to be as intense as what it was... I was waiting from roughly 9 o'clock at night to 3 o'clock in the morning in the MOD building waiting until we had to march out. Once I was out, we were standing in the one place for numerous hours rehearsing every in and out of how the funeral would go. This included watching all the horses, the Army, Navy and each band walk past as if it were the real thing. It even included a mimic coffin as if it was real. I was exhausted after such a long and cold night but it gave me much more anticipation till the real thing occurred. The day had finally come and I was a bundle of nerves, although it made me so immensely proud to be there representing the Royal British Legion. It felt like it had happened so fast but every minute was more and more special. It became real as the Royal family marched in front of me and I was standing in front of the Navy sailors who transported the coffin. The Queen's funeral was definitely a moment which I will never forget.



he was ready to leave. This meant we had to march back to Horse Guards. It was only a short while until we had made our way back up to Westminster Abbey and Charles had been made the official King. As I had participated in the coronation I will be presented a King Charles III Coronation Medal. It was unbelievable to see the Royal family go past in the Gold State Coach, this was yet again another moment I will definitely not forget.

**Mid Ulster Civic award**

Additionally I was privileged to be put forward to receive an award from the Mid Ulster Council. I was being recognised for my efforts within the Royal British Legion by all. It was an amazing experience to be acknowledged for my hobbies which gave me the opportunity to be apart of so many important milestones in history.

My overall experience through the Royal British Legion has been amazing and I have been provided with amazing opportunities and memories which I will treasure forever. I would like to give a special thank you to my uncle Norman Espie who has been training me alongside Susan Parke. Without them I would not have done so many unforgettable things. Cookstown High School has been amazing in supporting me on my journey. The teachers have been so understand-

ing if I had to take a couple of days off school or if I have had to miss a tracking test to complete events for the RBL.

**Festival of remembrance**

On the 10th of November 2022 I was flying back to London to be apart of the Festival Remembrance in the Albert hall. This is a Celebration of Service which reflects the nations admiration of the Armed Forces. This gave me an opportuni-



ty to show my respect and honour to the Armed Forces too. This opportunity required training and rehearsals as the programme would be broadcast live on television. This made me further excited as this was my goal when I initially started as a standard bearer, to make it the Albert Hall. I was also able to witness the soon to be King Charles III standing in the royal box observing the whole show.

**The Kings coronation**

On the 2nd of May I flew out to London to partake in the King's Coronation, this was a difficult time due to me being ready to sit my A levels and I had to understand that I would miss out on things such as Sixth Form leavers day. As much as I wanted to be involved in these activities I knew my opportunity was too good to pass up, so I accepted immediately. Again there was limited numbers of people invited and we were briefed on how there would be another overnight rehearsal. This time around the rehearsal seemed more intense due to the cold weather and levels of tiredness I was feeling as I had rehearsals the same day I landed. I was able to see the Royal gold carriage and the carriages which William and Kate would be in on the day.

Over the course of the couple of days we had rehearsals in the hotel, practising drill and we even practiced marching around Hyde Park to ensure it was up to a high standard. The 6th of May had come around and we got a bus to where we would march off from Horse Guards. When we had got to Horse Guards the streets were packed and excitement had filled the group. We were given orders to line up and get ready to march to Westminster Abbey where King Charles would have his coronation. When we had got there it was only a short time until the parade started. As it neared we did a royal dip for the king. He had a good gaze on every single one of us as he had passed. When he had went in to Westminster Abbey we were provided with a short break until



# Vistors from Finland

*In April 2024 we were visited by students from Espoonlahti Upper Secondary School*

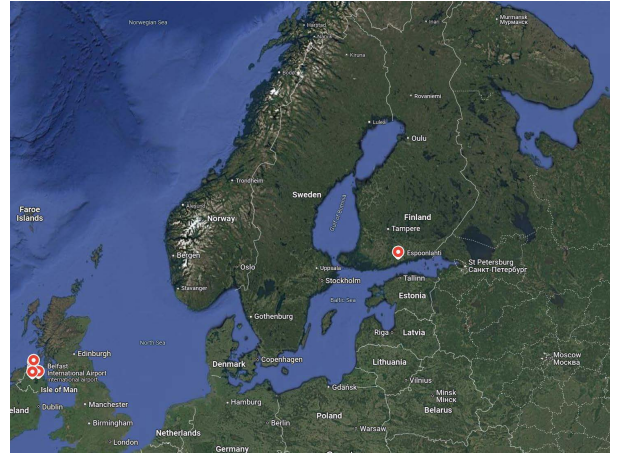
Hello Cookstown High! Today I'll be telling you about our wonderful visit and our experience at Cookstown High.

We are students from Espoonlahti Upper Secondary School, which is also known as Jylla. The nickname comes from our first ever principal who was named Gyllenbögel. We visited Cookstown High because it has a partnership with our school. I didn't know much else about Cookstown High other than that it has a good reputation for helping it's pupils be successful.

Our visit to Cookstown High was a great and unique experience. We were placed into two groups who had a different schedule, but we still had shared lessons. Our first shared lesson was English Literature, which was taught by Mr. Forbes. We were taught how to analyse poems and even got to analyse a poem that Mr. Forbes himself had written! A few students from Cookstown High who were attending the lesson also helped us while we were in the lesson and they also gave us good guidance.

Cookstown High and Jylla have many differences with the structure of a school day, with the most notable being that your lessons are only 50 minutes long. Our lessons are 75 minutes long, which gives the teachers a lot of time to go into the theory of the subject. Your lessons only being 50 minutes long means that you have to advance at a faster pace, which is something that I noticed in our last lesson which was advanced Maths. I enjoyed this faster pace of a lesson because it didn't get boring and the teaching was also very active.

My favourite part about Cookstown High were the students. Your students were very social and energetic, in contrast to our students who are shy at first but tend to get warmer with time. My friends and I had many interactions with your students and they left us with a great impression of the school. The school is set in really beautiful grounds and I really enjoyed the teaching in each lesson that I visited.



My friends and I had many interactions with your students and they left us with a great impression of the school.

Our overall stay in Cookstown was nice and relaxing. The scenery and views are calming and give a nice contrast to the scenery that I'm used to which made it feel relaxing. Cookstown High was certainly a highlight of the whole trip. Goodbye and thank you for this wonderful visit!







*Economic  
Food and Nutrition  
Practical Issues*

# Athletics

Lucy won Silver after being pipped to the gold medal but still managed to achieve a new PB of 12.6 seconds.

No sooner had we arrived back into school after our Easter break, the tracks were drawn, the pits were dug and the shot puts were weighed and ready to go. Athletics season always creeps upon us very quickly and it's a frantic dash to produce some finely tuned athletics in a short period of time. Preparations began for our first competition of the season which was the District Athletics Championships. Year 14 pupil, Lucy McClenaghan was our only Senior pupil to enter at that age group. She travelled to Clones in Monaghan on 29th April for her District qualifiers and did not disappoint. Lucy won Silver after being pipped to the gold medal but still managed to achieve a new PB of 12.6 seconds.

On Friday 3rd May, 28 of our Year 8 - 10 athletes headed to the Mary Peter's Track in Belfast to take part in their District 'E' Athletics Championship. The weather was on our side for a change and all our athletes competed well in their events. 6 of our pupils qualified for the Ulster Championships after finishing in the top 3. These pupils are:

#### Juniors (Year 10)

Sophie McNickle 1st (Gold) High Jump & Triple Jump  
Christian Fejkiel 1st (Gold) High Jump  
Skye McNickle 2nd (Silver) Triple Jump & 3rd (Bronze) High Jump

#### Minors (Year 9)

Yara Lopes - 2nd (Silver) Shot  
Marcus Gillis 3rd (Bronze) High Jump

#### Mini's (Year 8)

Vasco Russo 1st (Gold) Long Jump

On Wednesday 15th May, the Junior qualifiers headed back to Mary Peter's track to compete in the Ulster Championship. Despite not returning with any Irish qualifiers, we are extremely proud of our pupils efforts. Sophie, Skye and Christian all competed in the Junior High Jump, Marcus in the Minor High Jump and Yara in the Minor Shot Put.

Despite training hard over the last number of weeks, they couldn't achieve the same level they had produced at the District Championships, and that coupled with very stiff competition resulted in them finishing out of medal position.

Sophie and Skye also competed in the Junior Triple Jump with some really impressive jumps. Again, the level of competition was really high with many club athletes taking part. Both of our girls managed to finish in the top six, both jumping 9m 25cm which is a fantastic achievement for both girls. This was also a PB performance for Skye.

On Saturday 18th May, Lucy McClenaghan headed to the Mary Peter's Track to compete in the Senior girls 100m in the Ulster School's Athletics Championships.

Lucy was in a tough field and the competition was very high. Lucy successfully finished 2nd in her heat, with the 3rd fastest qualifying time overall. After a long day waiting about, Lucy then competed in the 100m finals where she finished 5th in Ulster. Despite not producing the time or result she wanted, Lucy should be very pleased with her endeavours. Lucy suffered a very serious injury last year so achieving 5th in Ulster is an amazing achievement.



# County Sports Results

Finally, the last of our Athletics event was the County Sports competition held in Campsie, Omagh. It's always a very relaxing and fun day and the weather was thankfully on our side. A very enjoyable day was had by our 27 pupils who all performed extremely well resulting in numerous medals as well one pupil achieving a new County Sports record. We returned with a total of 6 Gold, 12 Silver and 3 Bronze Medals. Medals were won by the pupils mentioned below.

**Year 8**  
 Lily Cahoon Gold in High Jump (New County record)  
 Bella Weir Silver in Shot  
 Vasco Russo Bronze in 100m

**Year 9**  
 Yara Lopes Gold in Discus  
 Silver in Shot Put  
 Keeva McElhennon Gold in 800m  
 Luke Johnston Bronze in 800m  
 Bronze in Javelin  
 Rebekah Walker Bronze in 200m

**Year 10**  
 Skye McNickle 1st in 200m  
 1st in High Jump  
 Sophie McNickle 1st in Long Jump  
 2nd in 100m  
 Matthew Cunningham Bronze in Discus

The following relay teams also won medals:  
 Silver Medals Year 10 Girls – Sophie McNickle, Skye McNickle, Isla McLean and Hannah Ross  
 Year 8 Girls - Anna Wilson, Kaiya McNickle, Lily Cahoon and Sienna Simpson

Special mention goes to Year 8 pupil, Lily Cahoon who set a new County record in the Year 8 girls High Jump with a jump of 1m34.

Congratulations to all the athletes who have represented Cookstown High School so well throughout the season. Special thanks goes to Miss Kerr, Mr Donnelly and Mrs Cheevers who helped ensure Athletics continued in Cookstown High School this season.

## Lily set a new County record in the Year 8 girls High Jump with a jump of 1m 34



# Badminton

The Badminton Club met weekly in the Leisure Centre on Thursday afternoons. It was a joy to have more staff volunteering to help each week with Miss Sinclair, Mrs Harpur and Mrs Montgomery joining Mr Gourley, Mr Lowe and Mrs Hall each week.

The highlight of each week was the ladder, where pupils worked their way up, or down, the ladder through challenges. The ladder enables the pupils to learn the rules of playing badminton as well as how to score.

## Christmas Doubles Tournament

The Christmas Tournament is always interesting as all the competitors names are drawn out of a Santa hat, so, you find out your partner on the day. All in the name of fun. After the round robin group matches the semi-finals were decided, and two great duals began.



The semi-final results were:  
Andrew Lennox and Luke Johnston beat Archie Hall and Daniel Brownlee

Ben Murray and Mark Glendinning beat Gareth Lennox and Teagan Carson

In the final it was Ben and Mark who came out victorious.

## Ulster Schools' Competition

In January, Mr Lowe took a Junior boys team to play at Lisburn Racquets Club. It was an impressive sight, seeing 12 courts in action, and our pupils' eyes were opened at seeing the level of competition being played by some of the Ulster and Ireland players present.

In the Junior Boys Division 2 League, Kyle Lennox, Andrew Lennox, Rhys Simpson and Dylan Hughes were awarded a walk over against Lisneal College. They then played a strong RBAI team losing 6-0.

In the Junior Boys Cup, the team of Kyle Lennox, Dylan Hughes, Thomas Crooks and Luke Johnston played Lisneal College in the first round winning 6-0. In the next round they faced Royal & Prior losing 4-1.

## Easter Singles Tournament

The Easter Tournament was played over two weeks. The first week saw all competitors split into four groups, with the top two in each group going through to play in the Division 1 finals, 3rd and 4th place went through to play in the Division 2 finals.

That was the plan anyway, however, with so much success in boys' hockey many of our club members were unable to take part in the Easter Tournament as they were playing or supporting the boys in the Bannister Bowl, Ferris Cup and Richardson Cup winning teams.



In Division 2 Luke Johnston (CA) played Mark Glendinning in the final with Mark winning.

In Division 1, last year's winner Ben Murray was pipped to the title by Kyle Lennox.

# The best bit about the Easter Tournament are the prizes; Easter Eggs all round!

The best bit about the Easter Tournament are the prizes; Easter Eggs all round!

## The Annual Prize Giving Dinner

This year, our sixth form decided to go to the Royal Hotel for a sit down meal. This was followed by the prizegiving where pupils are awarded Certificates and Easter Eggs for their efforts during the season.

The Most Improved Boy and Girl Awards.

Most improved girl was Lexie Jarvis.

Most improved boy was Luke Johnston (CB).

The Most Dedicated Boy and Girl Awards.

Most dedicated girl was Sophie Murray.

Most dedicated boy was Lewis Ferguson.

The Endeavour Award went to Rhys Simpson. It was great to have Rhys back with us again after being poorly last year.

Now to some fun awards for our 6th form.

The 'Mr Reliable' award – Benjamin Murray

The 'Keep calm and cool' award – Teagan Carson

'The Gaffer' award – Gareth Lennox

This year the Houdini award goes to none other than Mark Glendinning who cannot be with us tonight! (whoops...Mark actually did make it)

THANK-YOU!

To my colleagues, your teachers. Miss Sinclair, Mr Lowe and Mr Gourley, Mrs Montgomery and Mrs Harpur. We are truly thankful and blessed. Thank you for turning up, playing and being encouraging to all our members week after week,

Mrs Harpur, we wish you all the best with your new addition and hope all goes well for you over the next few weeks and months.

And to you, our players; thank you for turning up each week and making our club so worthwhile. Enjoy your Easter break and to those sitting A Levels and GCSEs all the best in your exams.

Badminton will start up again in September: same place, same time. See you there!

Mrs Hall





# Boys Hockey



## Bannister Bowl Triumph

Cookstown High School u13...2  
Friends School Lisburn u13...2  
(Cookstown won on Penalty Runs)

Cookstown High School's under 13 hockey team etched their names in history once more as they clinched the prestigious Bannister Bowl for the second consecutive year. The Bannister Bowl, the pinnacle of under 13 schoolboy hockey, witnessed a thrilling showdown between Cookstown High School and Friends School Lisburn, ending in a captivating 2-2 draw after full time. However, it was Cookstown's prowess in the penalty runs that ultimately sealed their victory, ensuring their reign as champions.

The match began with Cookstown asserting their dominance in the early stages, exemplified by Noah Cuddy's clinical finish from a penalty corner in the 6th minute, setting the tone for an intense battle. Despite Cookstown's initial onslaught, Friends School Lisburn quickly found their footing, with Angus Barbour levelling the score in the 23rd minute, showcasing their resilience and determination.

As the game progressed, both teams fought tooth and nail for supremacy, with Carter Lunn capitalising on a penalty corner opportunity in the 40th minute to give Friends School Lisburn a crucial advantage. However, Cookstown refused to relent, with Noah Cuddy once again proving his mettle by converting another penalty corner in the 47th minute, restoring parity and igniting hopes of a comeback.

Throughout the encounter, Cookstown's goalkeeper Marcus Gillis exhibited exceptional skill and composure between the posts, thwarting numerous attempts from Friends School Lisburn and keeping his team in contention with his outstanding saves.

Despite their best efforts, neither side could find



a winner in regular time, leading to a tense penalty shootout to determine the ultimate victor. Cookstown held their nerve admirably, converting all their penalty runs flawlessly, while Friends School Lisburn managed only one successful attempt, courtesy of captain Carter Lunn. Once again, Marcus Gillis proved to be the hero for Cookstown, making crucial saves in the penalty runs to secure victory for his team.

The decisive moment arrived when TJ Kelly confidently converted Cookstown's winning run-in, sparking scenes of jubilation among players and supporters alike. Cookstown High School's under 13 team celebrated in style, revelling in their achievement of retaining the Bannister Bowl for another year.

#### Cookstown Squad

Archie Hall, Daniel Brownlee, Daniel Hood, Dylan Hughes, Harry Jordan, Henry Lee, Jake Simpson, Josh Ferguson (Vice Captain), Luke Johnston, Marcus Gillis (Vice Captain), Matthew Watters, Neil Rea, Noah Cuddy (Captain), Ryan Cahoon, Stanley Jackson, TJ Kelly, Will Redford.  
Coaches: Cat Hall, Michael Haycock, Stephen Cuddy

#### CAPTAIN Noah Cuddy

"Today was class! Our team has gotten so much better since the season started. Even though everyone thought we were the underdogs, we've got some seriously good players that can give any team a run for their money. The game was very tough, but we kept going and Marcus was absolutely brilliant in goal during the penalty shootout!"

#### HEAD OF SPORT MICHAEL HAYCOCK

"What really impressed me about the U13 team is how they never gave up, even when things were tough against a really strong Friends team. Noah Cuddy always steps up when it matters most, and he was so calm when we needed that equaliser to push for penalty runs. And when it came to the shootout, we're lucky to have Marcus Gillis in goal – he's like a brick wall! It's amazing because we've never retained the Bannister before, so this win means a lot to us."



#### PRINCIPAL MISS G EVANS

"What an amazing week for hockey at our school! It was great to see our students showing so much enthusiasm, putting in the hard work, and showing real character on the field. We always emphasise teamwork here, and the U13s really showed what that means. Huge congratulations to all the squads and their coaches!"



# Boys Hockey

## Ferris Cup victory



Cookstown High School U14...2  
Royal Belfast Academical Institute...1

Cookstown High School clinched their seventh U14 Schools Cup title after edging past long-standing rivals RBAI by a single goal at the Stormont Estate.

In a much-anticipated rematch of the 2023 final, Cookstown High School faced off against RBAI in the U14 Schools Cup of Ulster Hockey. Despite the dismal weather, with relentless rain soaking the pitch throughout the game, the atmosphere crackled with excitement as the teams stepped onto the field at The Pavilion, Stormont.

Cookstown High School wasted no time asserting their dominance, finding the back of the net in the 6th minute with a well-executed penalty corner routine. Noah Cuddy, the goal scorer from the previous 2023 final, once again showcased his skill by scoring the opening goal, setting the tone for the match.

Cookstown extended their advantage in the 44th minute through a splendid combination play between Noah Cuddy and Callum Hewitt, with the latter calmly finishing the move to make it 2-0.

However, RBAI refused to capitulate. In the 46th minute, Isaac Linton got a goal back, reigniting the contest and setting the stage for a tense finale.

Both teams executed a good offensive press, creating numerous chances and keeping the game fluid and fast-paced.

Played over four intense quarters, the match saw Cookstown dominating possession. Their defence held strong against RBAI's attacks, particularly excelling in defending penalty corners. Marcus Gillis played a crucial role as goalkeeper, making some very important saves to keep Cookstown in the game.

Josh Ferguson impressed at right midfield, orchestrating plays, and dictating the tempo of attacks. Meanwhile, Charlie Costelloe, Ben Barbour, David Cuddy, and Will Redford showcased a resilient defensive effort, thwarting RBAI's attempts. Caleb Crooks impressed on the left wing, displaying composure and skill in retaining possession.



As the final whistle blew, both teams had given their all, epitomising the true spirit of U14 hockey. Despite the challenging weather conditions, it was heartening to see so many supporters down to watch. Furthermore, it was wonderful to witness all the families' getting pictures and creating memories with the cup after the game, underscoring the significance of the win.

Squad: Ben Barbour, Daniel Brownlee, Noah Cuddy, Charlie Costelloe (c), Bobbi Robinson (vc), Caleb Crooks, David Cuddy, Josh Ferguson, Marcus Gillis, Callum Hewitt, Dylan Hughes, Stanley Jackson, Luke Johnston, TJ Kelly, David Nelson, Will Redford, Ross Taylor, and Matthew Watters. Coaches: Michael Haycock, Stephen Cuddy, and Julian Costelloe

Head of Sport Mr M Haycock

"I am delighted for the boys and it's great to have another school's cup back in the trophy cabinet," remarked Michael Haycock, Head of Sport at Cookstown High School. "Our school has a rich history of being able to compete with the large Grammar Schools throughout the province. We targeted this cup at the start of the year and Julian Costelloe, and Stephen Cuddy have worked hard with the boys every week. This is a very strong group of players, and I am hopeful that several of them can go on to represent Ulster U16s next season. Can I thank all the pupils, staff, and parents for their support for the boys, it is very much appreciated."

*Captain Charlie Costelloe*

"We have worked hard with our coaches, and I am thrilled that we have brought the Ferris back to our school. I would like to thank everyone that came down to support; it was a great day. However, we don't have long to celebrate as we need to get back on the training pitch. We have the All Ireland U14 John Waring trophy to prepare for."

*Principal Miss G J Evans*

"As the school principal of Cookstown High School, I am thrilled to see the boys bring the Ferris Cup back to CHS for the second year in a row, and it is thoroughly well deserved. We are immensely proud of their passion, teamwork, character, and commitment; they have performed admirably all season," expressed Miss G Evans. "The team were really well prepared by their coaches - sincere thanks to Mr M Haycock, Mr J Costelloe, and Mr S Cuddy for their unwavering dedication and commitment."







# Boys Hockey

## Richardson Cup Victory



### Cookstown High School u15...2 RBAI u15 .....1

On the 20th of March 2024, Cookstown High School faced off against RBAI in the Richardson Cup Final, the culmination of under 15s Ulster school hockey. This highly anticipated rematch of the Ferris Cup Final promised an intense battle, and it certainly lived up to expectations.

In a fiercely contested match, Cookstown emerged victorious with a hard-fought 2-1 win, marking their 13th Richardson Cup victory. The game ignited early as RBAI's Frank Hollway swiftly converted a penalty corner in the 6th minute, catching Cookstown off guard with an early lead. Despite this setback, Cookstown's spirits remained high.

In the 10th minute, Cookstown came close to equalising, but a deflection over the bar denied them a goal. However, their resilience paid off in the 14th minute when Callum Hewitt showcased exceptional skill, equalising for Cookstown with a sublime swivel and flick. Momentum shifted in Cookstown's favour, and although RBAI narrowly missed a penalty corner opportunity in the 20th minute, Cookstown's defence held firm.

The defining moment arrived in the 29th minute when Cookstown's cap-

tain, Ed Irwin, demonstrated his leadership by flicking home another penalty corner, securing the lead once again. Captain Irwin's standout performance throughout the match was instrumental in Cookstown's victory.

Despite dominating possession, Cookstown couldn't extend their advantage further, but their resolute defence ensured they held on for the win.

Notable performances came from Lee Brisbane, Charlie Costelloe, and David Cuddy, whose contributions were crucial in maintaining Cookstown's solid defensive line. Additionally, Isaac Kelso and Ethan Redford showcased their prowess in counter-attacking, creating numerous chances and winning penalty corners for their team.

This victory was not only a triumph in itself but also secured the Junior Cup Schools treble for Cookstown, following victories in the Bannister Bowl (u13) and Ferris Cup (u14) earlier in the week. Such an achievement, previously accomplished only by Banbridge Academy, highlights Cookstown's rich heritage in schoolboy hockey and reflects the excellent coaching within the school.

#### Cookstown Squad

Aaron Abernethy, Ben Barbour, Joshua Bell, Lee Brisbane, Caleb Caskey, Charlie Costelloe, David Cuddy, Caleb Crooks, Edward Irwin (captain), Isaac

Kelso, Sam Hamill, Jack Patterson, Benji Patterson, Bobbi Robinson, Ethan Redford

Coaches: Godfrey Irwin, Julian Costelloe, Michael Haycock & Stephen Cuddy

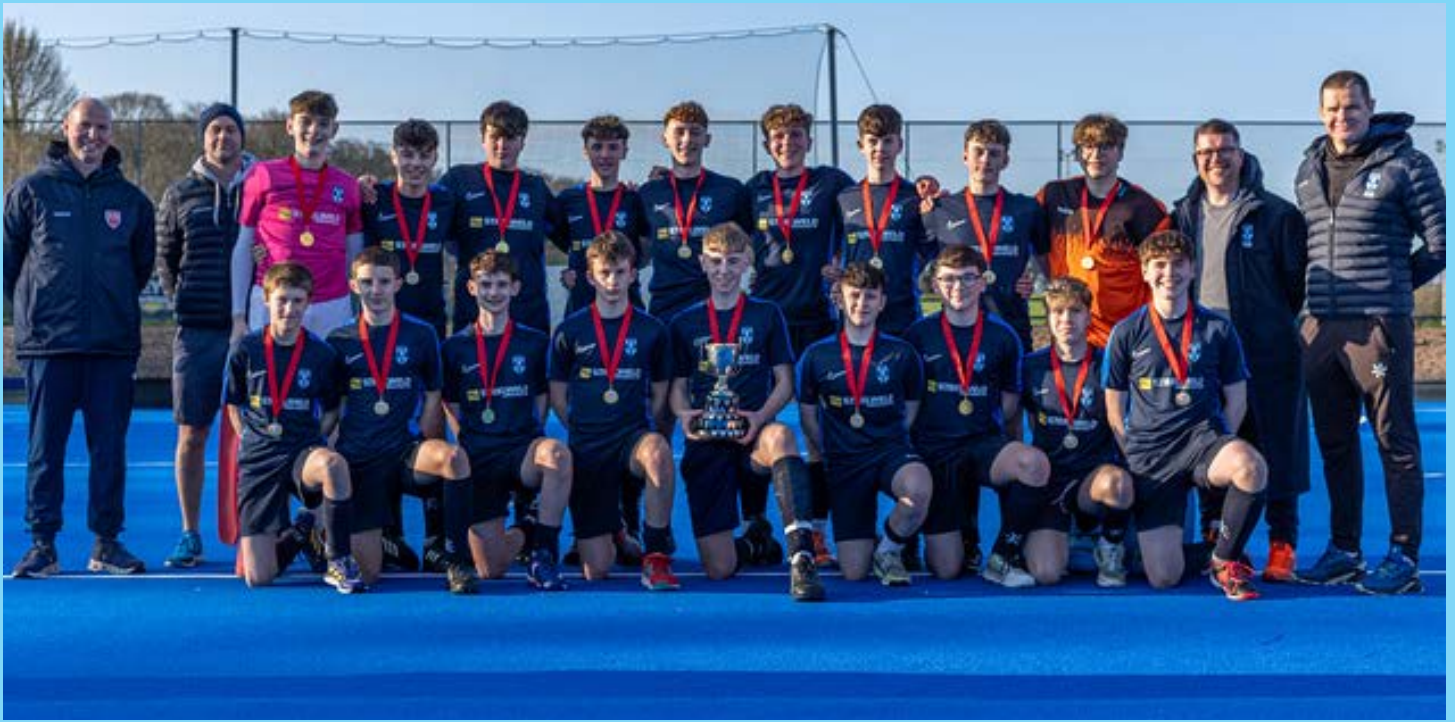
#### CAPTAIN Ed Irwin

"Securing the U15 Richardson Cup feels like a dream come true. Scoring during the game felt great, but what truly shines is the collective effort of our team. This victory isn't just ours; it belongs to our school, our coaches, and everyone who's supported us along the way. Today's match was tough, but achieving the Junior Schools Cup treble makes it even more special, especially considering we knew that the 13s and 14s had already won their cups.

Facing off against RBAI is always a challenge; many of us know their players well, as we've competed together in the same Ulster team. This familiarity adds an extra layer of intensity to the competition, making the victory more satisfying. RBAI is a formidable team, and they're a great bunch of lads. It's great to compete against them."

#### HEAD OF SPORT MICHAEL HAYCOCK

"It's truly an amazing achievement for our school to secure all three junior schools cups. This is a feat we've never accomplished before, and it's a testament to the dedication and talent of our young athletes. The U15s final, in particular, stands out as probably the most comfortable of the three finals.



The boys played exceptionally well, especially after conceding an early goal.

I must acknowledge the invaluable contribution of our volunteer parent coaches, Godfrey Irwin, Julian Costelloe, and Stephen Cuddy. Their dedication and expertise have played a significant role in our success. It's incredibly gratifying to see the rich heritage of schoolboy hockey continuing to thrive.

Lifting the Richardson Cup for the 13th time is a remarkable achievement, and I'd like to express my gratitude to Principal Miss G Evans for her support throughout the week. Congratulations to all the boys for their hard work and commitment."

#### PRINCIPAL MISS G EVANS

"What an incredible set of results we've seen throughout the week! It's truly fantastic to secure the junior schools cup treble. A heartfelt congratulations to our U15s for their outstanding performance against RBAI.

A special mention of appreciation goes to Head of Sport Mr. Haycock and his dedicated coaches - Mr. Cuddy, Mr. Costelloe, Mr. Irwin and Mrs. Hall. Their hard work and guidance have been instrumental in our success.

I'd also like to extend my gratitude to all the parents for their unwavering support. It's been a fantastic week for our school, and this achievement is a testament to the collective effort and dedication of our entire community."



# John Waring Championship



The 2024 edition of the John Waring All Ireland Schoolboys Championship was played on Wednesday 17th April 2024 with Lisnagarvey's Comber Road playing host to the event.

It featured six of the top school teams at Under-14 level for boys each season, namely the two finalists from the Provincial Minor Cups in Leinster, Munster and Ulster qualify.

Leinster were represented by Wesley and St Andrew's; Cookstown and RBAI were the two Ulster sides while Munster's Ashton and Middleton were also in the mix.

### Results

CHS...1 (Noah Cuddy)  
St Andrews...o

CHS...2 (Charlie Costelloe & Matthew Watters)  
Ashton...i

CHS...o  
Wesley...o

CHS...1 (Noah Cuddy)  
Middleton College...o

CHS...1 (TJ Kelly)  
RBAI...i

### Squad:

TJ Kelly, Stanley Jackson, Daniel Brownlee, Callum Hewitt, Marcus Gillis, David Nelson, Ross Taylor, David Cuddy, Dylan Hughes, Caleb Crooks, Matthew Watters, Ben Barbour, Josh Ferguson, Noah Cuddy (vc), Charlie Costelloe (c), Bobbi Robinson (vc), Will Redford.

Coaches:

Michael Haycock, Julian Costelloe & Stephen Cuddy

JOHN WARING ALL-IRELAND SCHOOLBOYS CHAMPIONSHIPS				
POS	SCHOOL	PLD	PTS	
1	 <b>COOKSTOWN HS (C)</b>	5	11	
2	 <b>ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE</b>	5	10	
3	 <b>RBAI</b>	5	7	
4	 <b>WESLEY COLLEGE</b>	5	6	
5	 <b>ASHTON</b>	5	5	
6	 <b>MIDDLETON COLLEGE</b>	5	1	

## CHS Under 14s are Irish Champions!





# Girls Football

*The seniors were unbeaten and  
the juniors only lost one match*

This year we had many Year 8s come and join us to play football. They brought with them lots of fun and laughter. The football season is short in school but the girls gave their all in training and were entered into a recreational NIFA tournament. Not the competitive encounter that the girls were used to but a fun way to end the term. We entered two teams one in the Year 11 & 10 category and one in the 8 & 9 category. We played several girls up a category for the seniors and these girls did not let themselves down with a Year 9 student claiming player of the tournament in the older category.

The seniors were unbeaten with the juniors only losing one match. A great day was had by all and we managed to avoid the torrential rain that came after. Well done girls.



# Girls Hockey 1st XI



## 1st XI Captains Quote

This season has seen the 1st XI experience many highs and lows and faced many tough opposition. The year got off to a rocky start with many fresh faces on the team, the girls had to find their rhythm quickly. A few losses at the very beginning made them more determined to overcome new challenges and their commitment to training every Monday and Wednesday paid off. The girls had a turning point against Cambridge House when the team scored off a well-executed short corner followed by a high intensity game which saw them come away victorious with their first win of the season. Spirits were high and they became hungry for more.

A series of matches against Hunter House, Raphoe and Lagan College saw the girl's confidence skyrocket and the scoreline became a reflection of their hard work and dedication.

The highlight of the season is without a doubt the Intermediate Cup. The 1st XI faced their old opposition Hunter House at a home match where they swifly scored within the first quarter. The girls continued to work tirelessly, and the match ended with a 4-1 win which saw the girls riding on

a high into the semi-final against Ballyclare Secondary School.

Eager and ready to play, new tactics and clinical short corners saw them ahead in the game 2-0 before Ballyclare managed to sneak one past the keeper. In the last quarter a penalty stroke was given against CHS. The tension could be cut with a knife as many of the girls watched on through their fingers. However, hope was not lost as Faye Anderson's quick reactions kept the girls in the game and saved the penalty stroke. The match ended in a 2-1 victory which saw the 1st XI girls' hockey team in a school's cup final for the first time in 16 years.

Finals day was met with nerves, excitement, and a determined attitude. The girls had an elevated morning, receiving a new kit and enjoying breakfast together followed by a hairstyling masterclass. The girls set off for Stormont where they faced Kilkeel High School. No one could predict how the match was going to play out, but the girl's confidence and efficiency did not drop once despite no doubt being anxious to play in front of a crowd of supporters cheering them on. The girls started the match with the upper hand, winning many short corners but unfortunately were not able to convert a goal. Luck was not on side with the 1st XI who put up

a back breaking performance and finished as silver medalists with a 2-0 loss. Despite this bitter-sweet end to the season, the girls showed excellent sportsmanship and their work ethic cannot be faulted, encouraging, and supporting each other every step of the way.

A huge thank you to the amazing coaches Miss Kerr, Mr Stewart and Mrs Johnston. The team undeniably would not have had such success if it had not been for all the hours they have kindly given up coaching the girls, which I know everyone has appreciated as well as all the craic at training.

I never thought I would miss being dragged out of bed on a cold Saturday morning to travel half the country, but now that the seven years have vanished, I am going to miss playing

hockey at CHS. It has been the highlight of my school career to spend so much time with and building friendships with such amazing girls. To see how the girls have adopted a positive attitude and genuine love for hockey makes me believe that they will be coming back for the win in the final next year! I want to wish the girls the best of luck for next season and continue to make all the leavers, coaches, and parents proud!

# 1st XI pen portraits

**EVITA BAUFALE**



Evita has been an excellent member of the team and is one of our very talented forwards who has made a good contribution to the total number of goals scored this season. She has scored some 'cracking' goals this season which she should be very proud of. Her quick wit and humour are sure to make everyone on the team laugh (including Miss Kerr). This is Evita's final year at CHS and we are very sad to see her go but we can't wait to have her back cheering the squad on from the side-lines next year.

**FAYE ANDERSON**



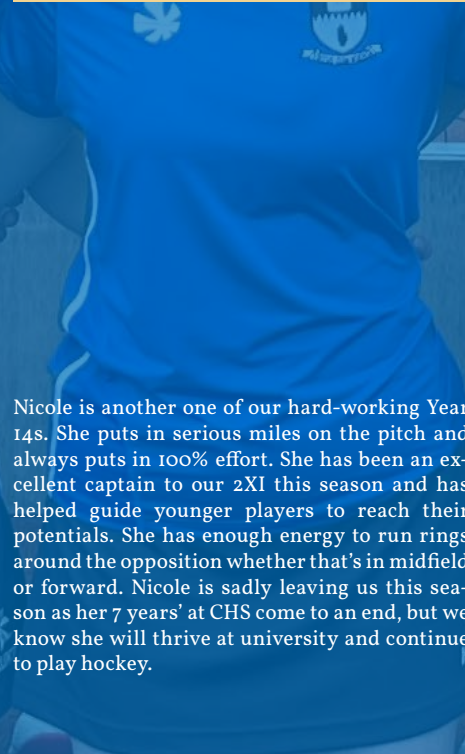
Faye has grown from strength to strength as our 1XI goalkeeper. One of the most remarkable moments of her goalkeeping career so far was during the semi-final of the Intermediate cup when she saved a stroke to secure CHS the win, allowing them to progress to the final. Notably, the most determined, vocal and agile player on the pitch we wish Faye all the luck with her goalkeeping career as she begins her university journey.

**LEAH KENNY (VICE CAPTAIN)**



Leah is the captain of our squad, the glue that holds the team together and the voice of positivity and encouragement at the most crucial times. Leah has been the driving force in defence all season guiding and supporting both younger and older players and using her telepathic twin powers to make seamless passes to her sister. She is a true role model for all hockey players and has given up her own free time to help coach and umpire younger and/or more inexperienced players. The future is bright for Leah and everyone on the squad will miss her deeply but we wish her all the best for her future and hope to see her on the side-lines for some games next season.

**NICOLE BADGER**



Nicole is another one of our hard-working Year 14s. She puts in serious miles on the pitch and always puts in 100% effort. She has been an excellent captain to our 2XI this season and has helped guide younger players to reach their potentials. She has enough energy to run rings around the opposition whether that's in midfield or forward. Nicole is sadly leaving us this season as her 7 years' at CHS come to an end, but we know she will thrive at university and continue to play hockey.

**HANNAH KENNY**



Hannah is 50% of the "Kenny Castle" that controls the defence and helps convert short corners into goals. Hannah has made numerous goal line saves, with a crucial one in the Quarter-Final of the cup to help the girls keep a clean sheet and secure their place in the Semi-Final. She is a reliable player who does 'the simple things well' and works exceptionally hard on the pitch for herself and her teammates. We hope we can convince Hannah to come back and umpire for the 1XI next season so we can all see her every weekend. Hannah has been amazing and is a massive loss to the squad but we wish her every success for the future.

**FAYE HUNTER**



Faye Hunter has had an exceptional season continuing to develop and gaining her well-deserved spot on the 1XI. She works tirelessly in midfield and gives her player a tough time on the pitch whilst driving the team forward. No doubt her growing talent and experience will shine through next season if she does not eat too many mozzarella sticks and keeps the cartwheels to a minimum.

# 1st XI pen portraits

**LOIS CUNNINGHAM**



Lois is one of the most skilled players on the team, using her ability to receive the ball from pass back to go on and beat four players and score a fantastic goal in the quarter final against Hunter House. She stays calm whilst beating players and the occasional rugby tackle is all taken in her stride. Lois has scored multiple goals this season and I am sure she will continue to keep up her streak next season.

**MEGAN MCKAY**



Megan has been one of our most versatile players this season with a taste in defense, midfield and forward. She stays positive and gives her 100% effort on the pitch and at training. Megan has gained confidence throughout the year and continues to develop her skills and ability with each match.

**PHOEBE GALLAGHER**



Phoebe has been our exceptional left mid this season who rarely got a break on the bench because of her strong work ethic. When she's not elbowing her player or getting threatened with a green card, Phoebe has undoubtedly been one of the most valuable players on the pitch and created the most chances on goal. Her talent progresses with every game and her hard work has paid off as Phoebe has had the opportunity to play for Ulster at the end of the season.

**RACHEL BROWN**



Rachel has adapted to the grueling position of centre mid this season, and she has taken it in her stride. When she flawlessly beats defenders it's usually with her lightning fast speed and leaves players dizzy behind her. Rachel has been a huge asset to the 1st XI and her hard work does not go unnoticed even scoring a few goals along the way. Next season she will take charge in midfield and serve as an excellent role model for the younger players coming up.

**SOPHIE DORNAN**



There isn't a minute on the pitch when Sophie isn't running endlessly and makes it difficult for her players to keep up. She has been a clinical part of the short corner routine and has smoothly distributed the ball to the forwards. Sophie is always keen to keep the game at a high intensity, especially in the last two minutes of the semi-final and her hard work is evident with the colour of her face at the end of every match. One of the most underrated players on the pitch, Sophie will continue to make a significant impact on the team.

**LEAH ALLEN**



New to senior hockey, Leah has had an exceptional season starting on the 1st XI. Leah has fit into right back with ease and never backs down from a challenge. The rest of the back line regard Leah as one of the most valuable players on the pitch and even though it can be confusing having three Leahs in the backline, she has undeniably saved many goals this season. Her dedication and commitment can't be faulted and a green card at the start of the season did not knock her confidence and she got straight back on the pitch looking for more.



**LOIS SIMPSON**



Lois started on the 2XI this year but quickly worked her way up to 1XI after putting in flawless performances at the start of the year. Lois aka Miss International has been one of the feistier players and is always first to chase down the ball no matter the score. Lois scored an important goal in the quarter final against Hunter House which grew her confidence even more. No doubt she will continue to play senior hockey and give the team many laughs.

**CAITLIN KELLY**



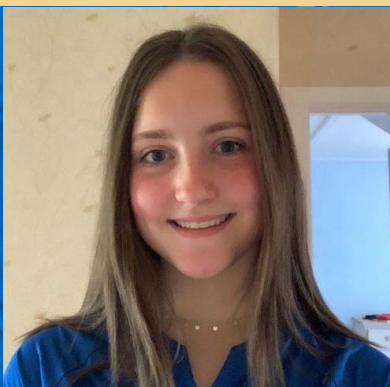
Another new player to senior hockey, Caitlin's enthusiasm and selflessness has seen her play in both mid field and defense. She is always communicating and encouraging everyone on and off the pitch, even keeping analytics when shes on the bench. Caitlin never stops working and has proved herself to be a powerful addition to the 1XI.

**KAITLYN HOOD**



Kaitlyn has stepped up to starting on the 1XI this year and what an impact she has made. Kaitlyn has slotted into forward and effortlessly links up with the midfield, scoring a crucial goal in the quarter final which is undoubtedly one of her biggest achievements since joining the squad. She has developed her skills to a high ability and has more years of senior hockey ahead of her to gain more valuable experience.

**ERIKA GOURLEY**



Erika started her senior hockey season as a forward using her speed to beat players three years older than her. Her confidence has grown a tremendous amount over the past year playing in every match, including the final where she left players in her trail. Erika will continue to grow and develop into the fantastic hockey player that she is with 3 more years of senior hockey ahead of her.

**LEAH CASKEY**



Better known as 'Brick Wall' nothing gets past her. Leah plays a crucial role as center back, hounding players that come near the circle and passing the odd ball to the sideline. Leah never fails to make everyone laugh at training and has always kept the team spirit high. She is one of the more experienced players at senior hockey and it shows as she always knows what to do and when to do it whilst giving her 100%. Next season Leah will take charge of the backline and her talent and experience will undeniably make a significant impact.

# Girls Hockey 2nd XI



The 2ndXI had a great season performing very well in several matches. They played a number of matches in the West of Mid Ulster league and came away with victories against Enniskillen, Strabane and Foyle. They also played several friendly matches throughout the year against Belfast High School, Down High school and the Royal School Dungannon to name a few. The girls all loved a Saturday morning bus trip and used this as the perfect opportunity to practice their singing skills. This squad

has gone from strength to strength throughout the season. They have all worked together to score some exceptional goals whilst our goalkeeper Kym was responsible for pulling off some great saves. This team has so much potential. We are sadly losing our Captain Nicole Badger this year as she finishes Year 14 and begins her university journey. We wish her all the luck in the world with this. The rest of the squad will return next year for another season and we can't wait to see what this squad is capable of.

# Girls Hockey U14 XI



What an amazing season this has been for the U14's. We had always known there was so much potential in this year group. The girls had performed exceptionally well both in Year 8 and U13XI so we knew they had the ability to do well now that it came to cup matches.

The first target was the Junior Superleague Tier B, a brand-new competition in its first year. Our girls were in the second tier of this league and faced competition against Cambridge House, Lagan College and Down High School. The girls performed exceptionally well in the group stages, winning all of their matches and progressing into the next round of the superleague. In the quarter finals the girls faced Carrick and after what was a tight match the girls won 2-0. This saw them progress to the semi-finals where they met Lurgan Junior High School. Once again, they saw a very tight match but the girl's showed composure, and after many chances and several crucial defensive tackles the girls got their goal winning 1-0. The final was nail-biting end-to-end stuff against a very strong Clounagh side. One goal was all it took to decide the teams. This goal came from a hard ball lifting into the air off a Clounagh stick.

Ellie Costelloe's experience, hand eye coordination and skill made this the goal of the year as she sharply volleyed it into the back of the net. Leaving the U14XI Junior Superleague Tier B winners. An amazing achievement.

Next up the girls took to the challenge of the Junior Schools Cup. The pressure was on as the girls had performed so well in the Superleague. They started their campaign against Coleraine winning 3-0. Then they made the long journey to Regent where they faced some very strong opposition, and it took them a while to get going. Once they got their momentum, they finally got that necessary goal, winning 1-0. Onto the next round where the girls faced Wellington, on home turf the girls were more at ease

and secured a 6-0 win to put them into the Quarter Finals of the cup. Wallace was their next challenge and knowing how Wallace play we knew we were in for a tough match. Wallace went 1-0 up and the girl's were finding it hard to get past the Wallace keeper but resilience paid off and the girls got their equalizer meaning the game went to run ins. An excellent set of run ins and great goalkeeping by Yara put CHS through to the semifinal against Strathearn. The semifinal was a tough test for the girls, physically they were much bigger, but technically we matched them. However, it wasn't to be our day as we missed opportunities from penalty corners, while Strathearn converted 2 of their chances. Another well fought game but unfortunately it wasn't to be.

The last challenge was the west of Ulster League, Cookstown, played Omagh, Raphoe, Strabane and Foyle. Once again, they remained unbeaten and came out west of ulster league winners.

The girls should be credited for all the hard work they put in over the season, their commitment, dedication and enthusiasm cannot be questioned. Well done girls on a memorable season.



# Girls Hockey U13 XI



The U 13 XI had an excellent season this year and were unbeaten throughout. The girls played several friendly matches against some tough opposition, and they also played in the west of Ulster League. Here the girls played, Enniskillen, Castlederg, Strabane, Foyle and Omagh. In all these matches, the girls proved to be the stronger team, scoring many impressive goals. The girls played some fantastic hockey with many of these girls playing up in the

U14XI girls' side. The strength from their training shone through as the girls scored many goals throughout the season and have proven to have a very strong attacking ability, defensively the girls remained solid throughout and we have so much to work with as we move into next season. We look forward to seeing what next year brings for these girls.

# Annual Hockey and Netball Awards Dinner

This year's awards dinner saw over 100 students attend what is now seen as one of the most popular dates in the sporting calendar. This year was even more prestigious as several new cups were sponsored by local businesses. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following Businesses :  
 Artafex, Outfield Clothing, Designlab, Killymoon Bespoke Living, Bickers Dornan, CFC Interiors, IL Contracts, R Johnston and Sons building Contractors and JD Catering supplies.

We would also like to thank all the parents who donated cups. A special mention needs to go to the following who also donated cups; CHS Former Pupils Association, Mid Ulster Netball Club, Linda Black (stalwart of Cookstown Ladies Hockey )and Mr Ronnie Charles in memory of his late wife. All trophies were gratefully received and the pink t-shirts also went down a storm.

## Most Improved



Team	Most Improved Player	Most Enthusiastic
1st XI	Kaitlyn Hood	Leah Caskey
2ndXI	Sarah Cuddy	Anna Millar
U15	Annabelle Davidson	Lydia McFarland
U14	Ellie Lyle/Lauren Wilson	Lauren Harkness
U13	Ruby Acheson	Rebekah Walker
Yr 8	Sienna Simpson	Poppy Bell
<b>Netball</b>		
Senior	Alex Neill	Emma Harkness
Intermediate	Lois Simpson	Leah Glendinning
Intermediate B	Alexandra Farquhar	Kellie Harkness
Junior	Lauren Harkness	Freya Mills
B Netballers	Ruby Kelly	Rebecca Simpson
Minor	Rachel Charles	Isla McLean
Yr 8	Bella Weir	Alexis Ferguson

## Most Enthusiastic



## Player of the Year



Cup Name	Award	Name
NFU Mutual Cookstown	1 <sup>st</sup> XI Player of the Year	Hannah Kenny
	2nd XI Player of the Year	Nicole Badger
	U15 XI Player of the Year	Caitlin Kelly
The Donnelly Cup	U14 XI Player of the Year	Ellie Costelloe
	U13 XI Player of the Year	Hannah Ross
The Charles Cup	Yr8 XI Player of the Year	Anna Wilson
The Bowman Cup	Senior Player of the Year	Alex Davidson
Primacy Farm Butchers Cup	Intermediate Player of the Year	Anna McKeown
IL Contracts	Intermediate 'B' Player of the Year	Annabelle Davidson
	Junior Player of the Year	Sophie & Skye McNickle
	Junior 'B' Player of the Year	Mia Greaves
	Minor Player of the Year	Hannah Ross
The Hughes Cup	Year 8 Player of the Year	Alex Montgomery
	Goalkeeper of the Year	Yara Lopes

This year was even more prestigious as several new cups were sponsored by local businesses

Cup Name	Award	Name
Bickers Dornan	Senior Players Player	Leah Kenny
The Hunter Cup	Intermediate Players Player	Faye Hunter
The Harkness Cup	Intermediate 'B' Players Player	Taylor Hessin
The McKenzie Cup	Junior Players Player	Miah Donnelly
The Wilson Cup	Minor Players Player	Sarah McKenzie
The Greer Cup	B Netball Players Player	Sarah Biggar
Outfield Clothing	Year 8 Players Player	Evie McIlmoyle



Cup Name	Award	Name
Bickers Dornan	1st XI Players Player	Evita Baufale
The Linda Black Cup	2nd XI Players Player	Ruby McCormick
The McKay Cup	U15 XI Players Player	Leah Allen
The Irwin Cup	U14 XI Players Player	Sophie McNickle
The Design Lab	U13 XI Players Player	Elen Irwin
Killymoon Bespoke Living	Year 8 Players Player	Genevieve Phillips-Booth



Cup Name	Award	Name
Mid Ulster Netball Club	Personal Best Netball	Emma Reed
CHS Former Pupils Association	Attacking Player Netball	Katy Hutchison
The Ross Cup	Most Improved Junior Netball Player	Elen Irwin
R & R Johnston	Most Improved Senior Netball Player	Sophie Dornan
Harkness, Hunter & Mills	Best Teammate Netball	Abi Espie
JD Catering	Netball Best Defensive Player	Faye Hunter
The Caskey Cup	Personal Best Hockey	Megan McKay
CFC	Most Attacking Player Hockey	Skye McNickle
The McLean Cup	Most Improved Junior Hockey Player	Rebekah Walker
Artefax	Most Improved Senior Hockey Player	Phoebe Gallagher
Outfield Clothing	Best Teammate Hockey	Abbie Simpson
Emily Charles Memorial Cup	All-round Hockey Award	Sophie Dornan

The Johnston Cup, Hockey  
Senior Club Player of the Year 23-24  
**Leah Kenny**

Hockey  
Junior Club Player of the Year 23-24  
**Sophie McNickle**

The Cheevers Cup, Netball  
Senior Club Player of the Year 23-24  
**Leah Kenny**

Netball  
Junior Club School Player of the Year 23-24  
**Rebekah Walker**



Emily Charles Memorial Cup



Senior Club Player of the Year





DesignLab



Former Pupils Association



Artafex



J D Catering  
Supplies

Outfield  
Clothing



R Johnston & Sons  
Building Contractor

Killymoon  
Bespoke Living



# Football

## Under 15 Squad



U15 football started in Term 2 this year and with a large panel of eager and skilful players training was both enjoyable and worthwhile. All players trained with a focus and desire to improve both as individuals and to develop as a team and over the months ahead this proved to be the case where many players developed both in confidence and ability.

Our first game was a home fixture to Dalriada. After a very difficult first half which ended 1-1 CHS came out in the second half with great composure and control on the pitch and eventually ran out 3-1 winners. Goal scorers on the day were Finaly Ross (2) and Dionisio Mota (1)

Our second group game was an away fixture to the team who beat us in last years final Limavady Grammar, this again was a very difficult game which was very hotly contested. At half time the game was equally poised at 1-1 but midway through the second half Limavady took the lead through a well worked set piece. Late in the second half when CHS were chasing for an equaliser we were caught on the break and the game finished with a 3-1 loss. Goal scorer on the day Finaly Ross

Our last group game was an away fixture against Ballymoney High

School where we needed a win to take us safely through to the semi finals. After a relatively comfortable first half where CHS both dominated the possession chances created came in leading 2-0 but left a host of excellent opportunities behind them. In the second half Ballymoney regrouped and played a more direct

brought to Coleraine Showgrounds to be played.

All the recent hard work on the training field showed through with well executed set-pieces and structured build up play but just couldn't find the back of the net. The breakthrough came in the second half we pounced on a loose ball in the



style of play and rocked CHS with 2 quickfire goals to level the game. CHS responded very well and again dominated the game through excellent control of the ball and eventually ran out 4-2 winners. Goal scores on the day Finaly Ross (3) and Maverick Riches (1)

After winning 2 group games and finishing 2nd in our section we had to travel to group B winners Dominican College which due to poor weather conditions at the time was

box to finish well to the net and the defence stood strong to give us a well-deserved 1-0 win. Goal scorer on the day was Jack Johnston

For the final we again faced a familiar foe in Limavady Grammar in a sun soaked Coleraine Showgrounds, a wonderful venue which our boys have been lucky to play a number of games at.





From the first whistle our boys played on the front foot and only for some great saves from the Limavady goalkeeper, CHS could have taken an early lead. As the game settled it was clear this was going to be a very tightly contested affair.

After an opening spell of pressure from CHS, we finally made it pay after 11 minutes with some great work out wide from Maverick Riches to beat his man and put in a pinpoint cross, met by Macauley Harkness with a sliding finish to the net. The game was very nip and tuck for the rest of the half with clear cut chances difficult to come by. After a period of very even play CHS were adjudged to commit a foul in the

box and gave away a penalty which Matthew Hayman did excellently to save and preserve his teams narrowest of leads.

In the second half Limavady came out all guns blazing and could easily have scored only for some excellent goal keeping from Matthew Hayman. CHS soon settled in to the second half and began to control the play and after some excellent patterns of play opened a great opportunity which Daniels Levsins coolly finished to the back of the net. This goal was the breathing space CHS needed to be able to fully impose themselves on the game.

After Limavady were reduced to 10 when one of their players received a

second yellow card CHS finished off the game with 2 further excellent goals another from Daniels and a final goal from the excellent Maverick Riches.

This was an excellent performance from front to back with a number of subs coming on and making excellent contributions against a very strong Limavady team who beat CHS on the previous 2 occasions they met.



# Golf



In November 2023 Ellie Costelloe (Year 10) and Noah Cuddy (Year 9) represented CHS at the U16 Irish Junior Schools' Qualifying tournament in Dungannon Golf Club.

The competition took a Stableford format, played over 18 holes, with Noah and Ellie competing alongside Ulster's best junior golfers, scoring 35 and 31 points respectively.

This is the first time CHS has been represented at an Irish Schools' event and we hope to make it a regular occurrence. Well done to you both



ford competition.

It was a pleasure to watch Finlay, Noah and Ellie manage the highs and lows that occur in a round of golf with such grace and sportsmanship.



Ellie did tremendously, finishing in 3rd place in the U16 Girls Championship! She did so by scoring 40 points comprising of 9 pars, 6 birdies and an eagle on the 11th. That is some result!



In May 2024 Archie Hall entered the UK Wee Wonders tournament. The regional Qualifiers were held in Dungannon Golf Club. He qualified for the Irish Regional Finals in the U13 age group. The final takes place in Ballina, Co. Mayo on July 14th and we wish him all the very best.

So, to all you aspiring golfers, get out on the course and get hitting so we can have more entries in next year's competition

## House Golf Competiton

On Monday 24th June our first house golf competition was held at Killymoon Golf Club. 22 pupils teed off after a quick briefing by Mrs Hall.

The adrenaline was pumping resulting in a



few wayward drives off the first tee. Soon, the pupils were round the corner and out of sight, much to their own relief.



The 2nd hole named 'Coagh Road' was where the first trophy of the day would be decided; Nearest to the pin. A fine tee shot by Ellie Costelloe secured her the prize. And on they tramped. Up and down the fairways. Birdies, eagles, bogies, double bogies. Great shots, not so great ones, brilliant chips to gain pars or eagles. You name it, Killymoon saw it!



The next prize of the day was the 'Longest Drive' on the 12th, named 'The Maples'. Luke Williamson held the longest drive for a good half hour until Finlay Ross decided to put everyone out of the running, driving up close to the left-hand bunker.



Pupils registered with Golf Ireland and holding a World Handicap Index competed in two competitions during their round;



The 'House Competition' where all pupils scored points in the 'Stableford' format, and 'The Golfer of the Year' competition, where pupils with a WHI counted each shot in a 'Medal' format. Finlay must be commend-

ed for his superb gross score of 73. Mrs Hall and Mrs McCabe were very busy counting shots and points at the end of the 18 holes while the boys were fed and watered by Darren and Stacey Gordan in Fairways restaurant.

After much chat amongst the pupils over their welcomed refueling lunch, the scores were counted, checked and the presentation began:

The House Competition:

- 1) Killymoon
- 2) Lissan
- 3) Coolnafranky
- 4) Drum

Stableford:

- Best Front 9: Charlie Costelloe 29 points
- Best back 9: Gary Simpson 26 points
- Winner: Gary Simpson with 50 points
- Second: Ben Barbour and Charlie Costelloe with 48 points

Golfer of the Year: Donated by Mrs C Hall  
Best Gross: Finlay Ross 73; a fantastic result  
Best Nett:

- 1) Gary Simpson 57
- 2) Charlie Costelloe 60
- 3) Caleb Crooks 63

Pupils and staff had a great day out full of fun and frustration. Best of all, it's been booked again for June 2025. Get your cards in!



# Netball

This year has once again seen many successes on the Netball Court. All Year groups have worked tirelessly throughout the season in the NI League, Shield Bowl and in the Cross Community Tournaments. The girls efforts have resulted in some really good results as well as some silverware for the trophy cabinet. Special mention goes to the Senior squad who won the NI Bowl in their final against Enniskillen Royal in a fantastic final.

A big thanks goes to our sponsors, J & K Coaches for our Kukri netball tops for this final and also for their very reliable bus service to all our matches. Thanks also goes to all those parents and friends who supported the girls on their Netball Journey.

My sincere thanks also goes to Mrs Thompson and Mrs McMullan who have supported me in delivering Netball in the school, coaching the B's and also helping out the Year 8's and Senior practice when required. Without their help, the number of girls we

can accommodate would be drastically reduced and our girls wouldn't achieve the success they do.

This year we have 5 girls leaving us to move on to pastures new when they leave at the end of the year. To Leah K, Alex D, Leandra, Emma and Alex N – you have been so dedicated over the years and have made such progress. You have made us proud in the determination and effort that you show in each and every match, training session and school Netball event. We want to thank the 5 of you for all you have given to CHS Netball over the years!! You have been amazing.

Finally, well done to all the Netball girls who train each and every week and dedicate their time to their sports. It does not go unnoticed and we appreciate each and everyone of you. You should all be very proud of your efforts and achievement this season.

Mrs Cheevers

## Senior Netball

The Senior squad has faced many tough opponents this year in the NI Senior League A where they faced challenging teams such as Lumen Christi and Thornhill. The squad has played these teams previously and so knew they would be competitive matches. Nevertheless the girls worked incessantly, showed great sportsmanship and finished 3rd overall.

This result saw the Seniors facing Friends School Lisburn in the Section 3 final. Although the girls kept their composure and put up a top class performance, unfortunately it wasn't enough to defeat the resilient Friends team and the Seniors came away with the silver medal with their heads held high.



Many of the seniors, especially the girls who were leaving, believed they had finished their Netball career at CHS, however they quickly had to dry their eyes as the seniors faced an unexpected entry into the NI Shield competition. The first round saw them lose against a strong Sullivan Upper team where they were knocked into the NI Senior Bowl.

In the quarterfinal, the seniors faced Shimna. The girls had a rocky start to the match but soon found their rhythm and managed to convert goals and turnover play. Due to this success, the Senior squad progressed to the semi-final against Carrickfergus Grammar. The girls put up arguably one of their best performances and dominated every quarter of the match. Their quick reactions and efficient play saw a 21-13 victory and now progressed to the final.



In the final the girls faced Enniskillen Royal Grammar School. They were keen to get started although they kept their composure to ensure they played to the standard they knew they were capable of. An extremely tight match saw the girls win the first two quarters by only a few points however they briefly lost their rhythm in the third quarter, where they were down by only one point. The tensions were high, but some excellent play saw the seniors pull away in the last 5 minutes and were victorious with a 21-18 win. Their attitude, dedication, and commitment this season cannot be understated, which no doubt led to their success.

high performance training, who also has very kindly given up her own time to put up with all of us!

Leah Kenny (Captain)

Netball has been such a huge part of my time at CHS. I have made so many memories and friendships over the past 7 years which i cannot believe have passed so quickly. There was never a dull training session and bus journeys to matches will be missed as well as all the craic. A special thank you to Mrs Cheevers who has been an excellent coach over the years, providing support and



# Senior Netball pen portraits

## LEAH KENNY (GS/GA) CAPTAIN



Leah has been the back bone of this squad throughout her 7 years at CHS. Leah was extremely dedicated to her training and match play that resulted in her earning captaincy for her final year on the squad. Leah is a very talented player who was really invested in her tactical play. She has produced some very impressive shooting stats and she has helped the girls to secure many wins this year. During matches, Leah gives every match her all and it's been fantastic to see her lead her team to the NI Bowl Final and lift the trophy this season. It's been extremely well deserved. We will greatly miss Leah next season and hope to see her take to the court next season at university.

## ALEX DAVIDSON (GA/GS) VICE CAP



Alex has been an excellent asset to the squad both as a player and a vice captain. Alex has supported Leah in leading the squad and when the two of them were on court, they were unstoppable. Alex could be relied on for sinking many a crucial shot during important matches. Her movement around the court was formidable and she was a very difficult player to mark. We will miss Alex next season – the court will certainly be a lot quieter next season without her.

## EMMA HARKNESS (WA/C)



Emma has been a key player for this squad over the last number of years and she has been very dedicated to her Netball over the past 7 years. No matter where she was placed, she always took on the role with a smile on her face – even when she was made to play centre!! Emma's infectious smile and happy disposition was extremely refreshing and she was our Little Miss Sunshine at all our matches and training. We will miss your happy face next year Emma and you'll be hard to replace on court as well.

## LEANDRA FRANK (WD)



Leandra has been another dedicated member of this Netball squad over the last 7 years. She is a key player in defence usually donning the WD bib. Leandra's laid-back personality is often evident on the court and she brings a sense of calm to match play when things are getting hyped up. Leandra always plays with great confidence and her back up play was very effective. Leandra, we wish you all the best for the future and we will miss you next season.

## ALEX NEILL (WD/GK)



Alex joined us in Year 13 and despite having little Netball experience, that did not deter her and she soon brushed up on her footwork skills to fit in nicely in our defence. Alex has proven to be a very versatile player, effective in any position she is placed in along the back line. She has even given centre court a go against the boys and once again, demonstrated that she can position herself comfortably anywhere on court. If she had more years at school, we would have tried you in a shooting position next!! All the best for the future Alex. We will miss you.

## RACHEL BROWN (GA/GS/WA)



Rachel has been a versatile player, capable of playing a range of positions when her team needed her. Her precise shooting ability as well as her quick reactions when passing the ball has made her an asset to the team and at times surprised herself with just how efficient her play was. Rachel has great potential and hopefully will continue to be an integral part of the team.

**RACHEL FARR (WA/C)**



Rachel has proved herself to be a team player and stepped up this year when she was needed. Even though Rachel has been placed against many tall defenders, she always holds her own and plays her own game, which has been crucial in high intensity matches. During the final, she played exceptionally with flawless passes into the circle and created many chances for her team to excel.

**KATY HUTCHINSON (C)**



Katy's work ethic and commitment never fails to inspire everyone on the team, even missing a biology field trip to play in the final this year. Her quick reactions and fitness can't be challenged, making essential interceptions which kept our team ahead of the game. She is extremely competitive and is always driving the team forward in play even though she may be exhausted from playing one of the most physically demanding positions on the court. I hope that she continues to play next year and maintains her fantastic ability on the court.

**SOPHIE DORNAN (GD/GK)**



Sophie has been a strong player and held her own in the defensive circle whilst making interceptions by her ability to read the game. Her calm demeanour has kept our team relaxed during stressful times on court such as the final where she managed to have more court time than any other player. Sophie's defensive skills and physical ability has benefited the squad massively and we hope that she continues her netball journey in the future.

**LEAH CASKEY (WD)**



Leah's confidence has shined through this year, effectively communicating, and encouraging all her teammates. Battling her player and giving her 100% effort on court, Leah has maintained a positive attitude all year and helped maintain possession of the ball when it was vital to the match. Leah has been a great asset to the team and I hope that she continues to her netball journey.

**ABI ESPIE (GK)**



Abi has been the girl's best cheerleader all season, showing up to training with a smile on her face and being a constant source of encouragement to her teammates. In the final against Friends she gave her 100% effort and her defensive ability has grown incredibly over the past year and I hope she continues to play netball in the future.

**FAYE HUNTER (GK/GD)**



Faye has been an exceptional player this year and her defensive skills cannot be understated. She has kept our team in the game many times catching rebounds and making valuable interceptions which have been used to turn matches around. She has been an integral part of the team coming on leaps and bounds and her growing confidence will help her reach her full potential and I hope that she continues to play in future.

**ANNA MCKEOWN (WA/C)**



Always training with a smile on her face, Anna has been called up this year to help the Seniors. Her hard work and dedication has helped her develop her attacking skills and she always encouraged her teammates from the sidelines. With a few years ahead of her yet, Anna will gain more experience and become a crucial member of the Senior squad.

# Intermediate Netball



## Intermediate 'A' Netball Squad

This year the intermediate squad played in the Intermediate 'A' League group 2. We played a Blitz Day in Omagh for our league in a round robin competition against Loreto Omagh, St Joseph's Donaghmore and St Ronan's Lurgan. All of these teams were very strong and gave us a tough match each time and even though we didn't achieve the results we were looking for, we finished third in this section. Despite this we were able to come away from the match knowing we had given it our best and knew what we needed to work on to improve our results for the upcoming matches. This resulted in us entering Division 3 playoffs. The first match was the quarterfinals against Strangford. This was a tough match as Strangford had some very strong players, but every player gave it their all and showed what they were capable of as we won with a well-deserved score of 18-8.

This was a great match and left us with high spirits for the semi-final.

The semi-final was against Thornhill. We knew from previous years that Thornhill was a very tough opposition and unfortunately we did not take the win as Thornhill proved to be too strong for us. Despite this, we have shown such progress throughout the season and we are all proud of our efforts. The players gave it their all in every match and next season we aim to get a deserved place in the final.

On behalf of the entire squad, I would like to give a big thank you to our coach, Mrs Cheevers as we wouldn't have been able to do it without you, from you coaching us every Tuesday after school to giving us the support and motivation we needed at every match.

*Ella Halliday (Captain)*





## Intermediate 'B' Squad

This year, the intermediate B team competed in the intermediate B league group 3. The fixtures were played as a blitz day in St Joseph's Donaghmore. The teams involved were St Joseph's Donaghmore, Drumglass High, Foyle College and CHS. Despite strong efforts and well played matches we finished in fourth place. This left us placed into Division 4 league playoff's. We faced Shimna Integrated College in the Quarterfinals of the playoff's. Despite a very valiant effort, CHS were unsuccessful in this match so were knocked out of the competition at this quarterfinals stage.

On behalf of everyone on the team, I would like to massively thank Mrs Cheevers for all of the time and effort she puts into our training every Tuesday afternoon. Despite some trying matches we all really enjoyed this year thanks to her and we can't wait to come back next year for the new season!

# Junior Netball



The Juniors participated in the Junior Netball A league, group 2. The girls played these league matches in the form of a blitz day. They had to face St Joseph's Donaghmore, Loreto Omagh, Lumen Christi College and Thornhill College in a round robin tournament hosted by CHS in Cookstown Leisure Centre.

Our team finished 4th so were placed into Division 3 league play offs. Our first match was the quarter finals against Banbridge. It was an extremely tight match with CHS leading most of the game but unfortunately Banbridge came back at us in the final quarter and we lost 10-7.

Our team then had the opportunity to play in the Junior Cross Community Tournament also hosted in Cookstown Leisure Centre. We played against 8 teams in-

cluding Omagh High School, St Ciaran's Ballygawley, Fivemiletown College, Drumglass, Drumragh, St Patrick's College Dungannon and Integrated College Dungannon. We won our section but were beaten 4-3 in the semi finals against St Patrick's College. Our team then faced Omagh High School in a bronze medal play off and won 5-4 to secure the bronze medals. Although it was a tough season it has been one of our best and we are all so grateful to have been included in this season's Blitz day and Junior Cross Community tournament.

Thank you to Mrs Cheevers for coaching and guiding us along the way.

*Rhea O'Donnell (Captain)*

# Junior Netball 'B'



This year our Junior Netball B team has had a great season, with learning & building up new skills, new friendships forming and most importantly having fun. From starting in September, this season has been a brilliant opportunity for us all to improve and thrive in a sport with the help of Mrs Thompson and Mrs McMullan every week.

Throughout the season, we were given the opportunity to have a mini Tournament with Drumglass which gave us all a greater insight of netball and where we needed to work at. Year 10 Bs were then given the chance to play against Omagh High School in a friendly match after the Year 10 Tournament. This was a great outcome for our win and left us all very pleased with our performance on the court.

Year 9 Bs were also given an opportunity to play a friendly match against Cookstown Primary School alongside the Year 8s.

As a team we feel so lucky to have the guidance of Mrs Thompson and Mrs McMullan as they took the time out of their busy schedules to coach and inspire us every week. Moving forward, the team hopes to enhance their skills and improve their technique through the next season.

*Sarah Biggar (Year 10)*

# Minor Netball



2023/24 was another fantastic year for our Year 9 netball squad. We started off the season with a competitive blitz hosted by St Joseph's, Donaghmore, where we played St Joseph's, Antrim Grammar, and Mt Lourdes. We finished third in the closely contested tournament, placing us into Division 3 league play offs.

We had an unfortunate loss against Strathearn in the quarterfinals, ending with a score of 18-6 to get knocked out of the league competition.

Despite this, we made a fantastic comeback in the Cross-Community tournament. The tournament this year was hosted by Drumglass High School, where we faced many great teams such as Omagh High, St Patrick's College Dungannon, St Ciaran's Ballygawley,

Fivemiletown College, Drumglass and Drumragh. We competed well and finished in second position going into the semi final stages. We beat Fivemiletown College in the semi-finals getting us into the final where we faced Drumglass in a competitive match and won the tournament. We came home with the trophy and the gold medals.

The dedication and hours of training our squad put in really paid off as we have had a great year. None of this success could have been possible without our coach – Mrs Cheevers, so thank you!

I can't wait for another brilliant season next year.

*Sarah McKenzie (Captain)*

# Year 8 Netball



Netball practice took place on Wednesday afternoon's in Cookstown Leisure Centre. Training was a lot of fun and we completed mini matches, drills, skills and a lot more.

At the end of April, we had our first ever match against Drumglass High School. Cookstown had 2 teams as we played in a mini tournament. It was great. Matches really help our competitive spirit. Both teams worked well

together and worked hard throughout but were unlucky to lose out to Drumglass. Next season we can only go up from here!

Thank you to Mrs Cheevers and Mrs Thompson for coaching us every week, we can't to go back next year!

*Alex Montgomery*

# Rugby



This year has been another successful season of rugby at Cookstown High School. The Under 12 team has shown exceptional commitment, as they trained hard throughout the season. Their focus on learning new skills, such as scrummaging and tackling, and their enthusiasm for the contact elements of the sport have significantly boosted their confidence and levels of performance on the field.

Building on last season's achievements, the Under 14 team continued their winning streak with impressive displays of skill and teamwork. They started the season strong, securing a victory against Sperrin Integrated College in a friendly fixture. This win set the tone for their subsequent success in the U14 Regional Bowl Qualifier, where they emerged victorious after defeating St Columba's, Sperrin Integrated College and Parkhall Integrated. This earned the team spot in the U14 High School Bowl Tournament final.

In the U14 High School Bowl Tournament final our first game was against Markethill High School. It was a very tight match that ended 5-5 with the CHS try being scored by Luke Bovill. The next match was

against a very strong Lisnagarvey team. CHS quickly went 10-0 down in the first half but fought back admirably with two tries from Matthew Cunningham to bring the score back to 10-10. Lisnagarvey then hit back with a few tries of their own to win the match 25-10. The last match of the afternoon was the 3rd place play off vs Beech Hill College. A valiant effort from CHS wasn't enough in this match as the score finished 10-20 in favour of Beech Hill. It was a great achievement for every member of the U14 squad to finish third in the High School Bowl Tournament. Well done!



Special recognition must be given to a few of our more experienced senior players, Oran Kennedy and Matthew Allen. Matthew Allen has been

selected in the Ulster U16 training squad and has just finished a hard summer training programme with the squad. We look forward to hearing how Matthew plays in next season's fixtures. Oran Kennedy was selected as Ulster Clubs U18's captain for a fixture against Munster clubs. Oran travelled to Limerick on the 27th of March with the squad for this 'friendly' fixture. It was an extremely physical match with also some great flourishes of running rugby. Munster Clubs ran out 50-37 winners. We wish Oran and his team good luck in their upcoming interprovincial fixtures.

Both rugby teams at CHS are eagerly awaiting another season of rugby in September and would like to take this opportunity to thank Ulster rugby for hosting the tournaments, Mr Dean Talbot (Rainey RFC) and Miss Hanna for the training sessions throughout the year, Mr McKenna for coaching the team during the tournaments and most importantly to all the parents that came to support and for keeping blood sugar levels high with the Haribo sweets!

*Mr Hastings*





*The success of the Table Tennis Club has not gone unnoticed. The school community is proud of the club's achievements and expressed delight in seeing the club active again*



# Table Tennis

*This year, the CHS Table Tennis Club has served up a fantastic success story, meeting at lunchtimes once each week, sometimes even twice, creating a buzz among students of all ages from Year 8 to Year 12.*

With around 15 dedicated pupils participating, the club has not only grown in numbers but also in enthusiasm and skill.

The club, which welcomed students from different year groups, became a vibrant hub for table tennis enthusiasts and those who were trying for the first time! Members gathered daily during lunch to hone their skills, share techniques, and enjoy the camaraderie that sport fosters. This year for the first time in many years, the hard work and dedication of the pupils culminated in participation in one regional and one national competition, where they competed against other schools in the area and across the country.

The competitions were a significant highlight for the club members, offering them the opportunity to test their skills against peers from other schools. Many students encountered opponents with many more years of experience and even some who had played table tennis for Ireland and had competed all around the world! Despite facing tough opponents, the students demonstrated remarkable sportsmanship and resilience, with many students earning Awards of Commendation for their effort and team spirit.

In the new year, the club received a boost with new equipment, thanks to the school's investment in supporting extracurricular activities. The new tables, paddles, and balls not only enhanced the playing experience but also motivated the students to practise harder and aim higher.

To celebrate the year's achievements and the relentless enthusiasm of the club members, a special treat was arranged. The students enjoyed a pizza party at the end of the year, a well-deserved reward for their commitment and hard work. The celebration was a fitting end to a year filled with excitement, learning, and sportsmanship.

The success of the Table Tennis Club has not gone unnoticed. The school community is proud of the club's achievements and expressed delight in seeing the club active again at a local and national level. We know we have their support and share with us as we look forward to seeing the club grow even further in the coming years. With plans to participate in more competitions and continue fostering a love for the sport, the future looks bright for these young athletes.

Congratulations to all the members for their fantastic achievements this year, those with medals and those without! You all have learnt something and made significant improvements!





*The club received a boost with new equipment, thanks to the school's investment in supporting extracurricular activities.*

# Destinations

Nicole Badger	Veterinary Medicine
John-Mark McCrea	Veterinary Medicine
Emma Caskey	Theology & Religion
Teagan Carson	Animation Production
Emma Dunseath	Adult Nursing
Alex Davidson	Food Innovation Management
Leandra Frank	Primary
Abbie McKirgan	Early Childhood Studies
Alex Neill	Sport & Exercise Science
Amy Crooks	Adult Nursing
Ben Murray	English
Mya Black	Religious Studies with Education
Megan Bell	Primary
Gareth Lennox	History with Education
Corday Kane	Environmental Health
Tom Wright	Mechanical Engineering
Adam McGeown	Biomedical Engineering
Alex Reilly	Criminology & Criminal Justice
Hannah Kenny	Chemical Engineering
Faye Anderson	Adult Nursing
Gary Simpson	Business Studies
Luke Haycock	Law Apprenticeship
Molly Graham	Veterinary Physiotherapy
Katie Kennedy	Chemistry
Jonathan Dallas	Microbiology
Matthew Connolly	Computer Science
Evita Baufale	Criminology
Leah Kenny	Law with Spanish
Emma McAdoo	Textile Art, Design & Fashion
Lois Weir	Maths with Education
Adam Espie	Games Design & Development
Jakob Gourley	Computer Science
Molly Carson	Management
Kai Lamont	Business Studies
Mark Glendinning	History
Timothy Clarke	Apprenticeship
Ben Smyton	Employment
Aren Kudrenko	Employment
Emma Harkness	Employment
Lucy McClenaghan	Employment
Ella-Jane McCullough	Further Education
Michael McErlane	Business Studies
Lewis Farquhar	Sport Physical Activity & Health
Amarah Donnelly	English with Education
Joseph Davidson	Apprenticeship



# Head Girl Report

LEANDRA FRANK

It has been an honour being Head Girl of Cookstown High School and I can't believe that I'm now off to university

It just seems like yesterday, I was wandering about CHS in my too big uniform trying to find my classes in first year.

My experience at CHS has been nothing but positive, whether it was at netball practice, in the classroom, Spring Concert or the school musical- I always enjoyed getting involved. However, through every experience the teachers were there every step of the way to offer their support and to offer constructive criticism when necessary.

The thing that helped me the most was the Career Ready Programme introduced by the Careers Department. This involved a series of master classes on various different employability skills and a mentor to guide me through my lower sixth year. Not only did I learn very valuable skills but I gained confidence and self-belief. Through lower sixth I was very unsure what my plans would be after sixth form but with the guidance from Career Ready and the CHS teaching staff I was able to investigate different career paths and finally decide that primary school teaching was the job for me. I'm sure Luke can agree with me in saying that it was a very beneficial programme.

As someone who stresses about even the very small things in life, Luke, who has yet to stress about anything in life, was the ideal person to work with and I can't thank him enough for his help through upper sixth.

I want to say thank you to our deputies, Megan, Molly, Timothy and Gareth who made life so much easier for us with their determination and hard work. We couldn't have done it without you and I wish you the very best for your future plans!

I couldn't not say thank you to the fantastic Mrs Johnston for her patience and kindness towards me personally but also to us as a



year group throughout our time at CHS.

I also want to say a general thank you to the teachers for their support over the last 7 years, each and every single one of them has been nothing short of spectacular.

Finally, congratulations to the Head Boy Louis, Head Girl Sophie and deputies Anna, Leah, Sam and Theo of 2024/25. I have no doubt that you will all be outstanding!



# Head Boy Report

LUKE HAYCOCK

I reflect on my time at Cookstown High School with a blend of nostalgia and gratitude

As I embark on the next stage of my educational journey, I reflect on my time at Cookstown High School with a blend of nostalgia and gratitude. From the flutter of nerves on my first day to the deep sense of accomplishment on my last, this journey has been nothing short of transformative.

Serving as Head Boy has illuminated the unwavering commitment CHS demonstrates towards supporting every student, whether through academics or extracurricular pursuits.

Sport has always played a pivotal role in my life, and my years at CHS provided me with opportunities to forge lasting friendships and explore my passion. Hockey, in particular, became a central focus for me. I proudly represented our school at four Irish Schools Tournaments, competing against teams from all four provinces and forming friendships I still have to this day! In my final year, I had the honor of captaining the Boys' 1st XI while also representing Ulster in international series against England and Wales. None of these incredible experiences would have been possible without the unwavering support of our dedicated coaches, umpires, and volunteers throughout my seven years at the school. The recent successes of our U13, U14, and U15 teams in their respective Ulster tournaments assure me that the future of hockey at our school is bright.

CHS has consistently encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone, and my final year was no exception. Taking on the role of Rolf in the school production of *The Sound of Music* was both a challenge and a joy. Though I might have been a sight for sore eyes, the experiences and memories created on stage will stay with me forever!

My role as Head Boy was made immensely rewarding by the support of a fantastic senior prefect team. Leandra, Molly, Megan, Timothy, and Gareth were instrumental in organizing various events, from school assemblies to our unforgettable formal at Galgorm, where over 200 staff and students

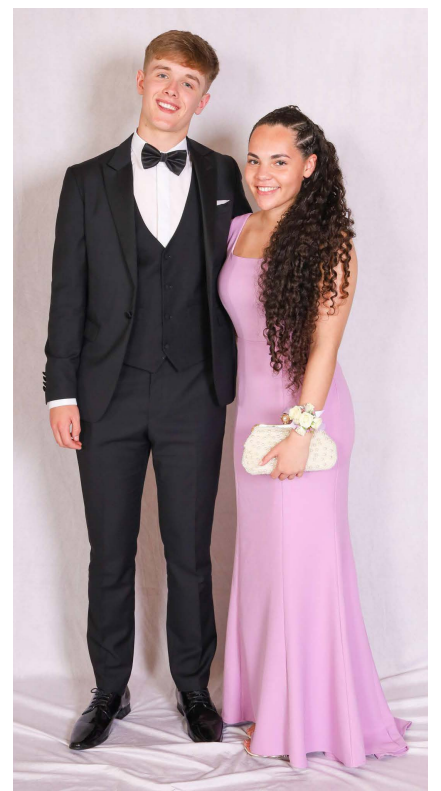


gathered for a final celebration. The effort that goes into preparing for such an event is no small feat, and I'm grateful to have had such a dedicated team by my side. A special shoutout to Molly and Beth, who may very well have broken the world record for the most balloons blown up!

The impact of our teachers at CHS has been profound, culminating in a memorable showdown on June 25th, when they faced off against a team of sixth-form boys in a football match. It was a fiercely competitive game, ending in a dramatic penalty shootout victory for the students—definitely a lesson for the teachers!

As results day arrived in August, it marked the conclusion of our chapter at CHS—a chapter I will always cherish. The friendships I've made and the education I've received here will remain with me for a lifetime.

I wish the senior prefect team for 24/25 all the best as they begin their new roles, enjoy the opportunity and I'm sure you will do amazing!



# cookstown high school

combined grammar and secondary school

