



# Dispatches

The Crossley Heath School News

March 2024

## A Word from the New Head



Joining a school with the history and heritage of Crossley Heath in our 160th Anniversary is a really exciting time. The Crossley Heath of today still retains so much of the culture of inclusion, determination to positively shape the future and dedication to providing a rich academic education that can be found in reading about the schools' origins. In my first days as a new member of the Crossley Heath's school family, I have felt a tremendous sense of ambition, a shared commitment to delivering the best possible education for our students and enjoyed a really warm, West Yorkshire welcome from staff, students and the community as a whole. For this I am very grateful and will aim to live up to the opportunity to contribute to the Crossley Heath's journey as a leader in this wonderful school.

I arrive at Crossley Heath having enjoyed nine years as a Head Teacher at a diverse and aspirant Sheffield school, learning how with strength of character and hard work, any challenge can be overcome and the underdogs can be victorious. I hope the experience I have gained working in different school contexts over the past two decades and across the county in a nationwide Trust, whilst working my way through the ranks of teaching, subject leadership and Headship can help me serve Crossley Heath successfully and further strengthen this wonderful school of ours. It is my intention to be a listening leader who builds on the firm foundations that have already been laid, who draws on the contributions of all in our school family and who promotes a sense of belief in providing the best possible education for every one of our children.

**Happiness** is at the heart of a truly successful school and being as friendly a school as possible really matters in developing our school culture. As a parent myself, the first question I ask my children after school is 'have you had a good day?' because my initial priority is their happiness and wellbeing. Inclusivity underpins happiness and our shared commitment to ensuring all members of our community can thrive and championing all protected characteristics is fundamental to the big-hearted school we are.

Academic aspiration is as high as possible and we are determined through our curriculum and teaching to promote the highest possible attainment for our students, as the strongest grades open the brightest doors. Ethical leadership skills are also fundamental to develop for our students as today's students will be the custodian's responsible for shaping society and our world in the years to come.

I hope therefore to play a significant part in leading a happy, inclusive and relentlessly aspirational school where we champion the students of today to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Dean Jones

### IN THIS ISSUE



Farewell to Sue

Page 5



World Book Day

Page 8-9

School-wide celebrations



Musical Memories Made

Page 13

GCSE Trip to Liverpool



Follow us on Facebook,



Email: [admin@crossleyheath.org.uk](mailto:admin@crossleyheath.org.uk)



# 6th Form External Charity Trip to Morocco



Two of our 6th form students, Simra Ali and Muskan Ishaq, are volunteers for the Unique Community Hub, a youth provision based in the heart of Park Ward, Halifax, and also the Unique Children's Charity (UC3) [www.uc3.co.uk](http://www.uc3.co.uk) which engages in projects and initiatives around the world.

Toyaba Ali, Trustee of the Unique Children's Charity, has sent this account of their involvement:

"Simra and Muskan both play a crucial role in the delivery of our *Empowering Girls* project on a Thursday evening and are also dedicated members of our charity -committed to always contributing their time, effort and skills towards our fundraising events.

A few of the projects the girls have been involved in include charity bake sales, car washes, homeless feeds and fundraising events for a number of different causes, along with challenges such as mountain treks. This year, the girls joined the charity on their annual trip to Morocco, working with an orphanage, an abandoned babies project and also with those affected by the recent earthquake that took place in September 2023. Their group also took part in the Marrakech Marathon on 28th January.

This experience gave them the opportunity to amplify their skills and knowledge within the humanitarian aid sector and could be an avenue that they wish to pursue in the future.



Morocco was a brilliant experience, and the girls were fantastic in their demeanour and carried out their charitable acts in the most courteous manner.

We travel out to Morocco every year for the Marrakech Marathon (we only do the half one for now though!) and whilst we're there we visit the Hospital of Hope for the Abandoned Babies Project and this year we also went to the Atlas mountains where many lives were lost and others left severely affected by the impacts of the earthquake.

Simra and Muskan both played a pivotal role in ensuring that the right aid was hand delivered to the beneficiaries and this included using budgeting skills to think about what would meet the needs of the project in the most cost effective way to ensure that we were getting the most value for our money. They thought about items the children may need and more specifically what kind of toys would be suitable due to their needs. I was very proud of their conduct throughout the trip and I'm sure you will have been too. Whilst in the mountains, we also hand delivered the food parcels that we helped pack and spent some quality time with the locals putting a smile on their face by playing games and taking lots of selfies together! The children really enjoyed messing about with the different filters and I know that the experience was an unforgettable one for Simra and Muskan - they are both a credit to the Crossley Heath School community and I am very proud of how they have developed in the last couple of years.

Thank you all once again for authorising this trip for them. They have been wonderful representatives for Crossley Heath school."







# Crossley Heath Ski trip, 2026

## 6th Form Advocacy Workshop



We were delighted to host a workshop day in February for our Y11 and Y12 students considering pathways into legal fields, run by barrister and former student Emily Landale.

Jennah Deane (11E) summed up the day as follows:  
 "Participating in the Law and Advocacy Workshop led by Emily Landale was an invaluable opportunity for all students involved. Throughout the day,

we were fully immersed in a realistic courtroom experience, gaining insight into the meticulous preparation required for building a defence. From analysing evidence and witness statements to engaging in role-play for questioning techniques, Emily's guidance was instrumental. Her expertise extended to demonstrating the effective use of precedence in bolstering arguments and emphasising the importance of courtroom decorum when addressing judges and juries. The morning session left us captivated by the intricacies of legal proceedings, and we relished the interactive teaching style employed. By day's end, the allure of a career in law was undeniable for many of us. We are immensely grateful to Emily Landale for generously sharing her wealth of knowledge and for orchestrating such a memorable and enlightening day."



Following the unprecedented disappointment of the 2023 ski trip cancellation, we have been working hard to ensure such an issue doesn't happen again.

We are currently in the early stages of planning a ski trip for the February half term of 2026. This would be open to pupils currently in Years 8 – 11 (Years 10 – 13 at the time of the trip). Skiing is an expensive sport/holiday to run.

We anticipate the cost to be in excess of £1500, for 6 days of skiing (all inclusive). This is one of the main reasons Crossley Heath runs ski trips on a bi-annual basis (in most cases), to give parents/pupils time to save up for the trip. We will release further information as soon as we are able, likely to be September 2024.



## Biology Olympiad—February 2024



Fourteen brave A level Biology students entered the Biology Olympiad in February this year. The competition consists of two 45-minute multiple choice papers of questions that draw on A level knowledge of Biology but also include challenging and stimulating problem-solving application questions about unfamiliar contexts, such as the way parakeets have learnt to open refuse bins in Sydney and the ability of glass frogs to become almost transparent when they sleep.

Amelie Thomson in y13 achieved an excellent score and will be awarded a bronze certificate for her efforts. Brinda Gnananand, also in y13 received a commendation for her score. Despite being in year 12 and having only studied 40% of the A level course, Halima Ali and Zara Younis also achieved a commendation, which was particularly pleasing.

All year 12 students should have the opportunity to enter again next year to improve on their score from this year. The highest scoring students could be selected to be part of a team representing the UK in the International Biology Olympiad.





Years 9 and above have been offered the opportunity to "get out there" and complete a Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) award.

This years' cohorts for Bronze or Silver have already begun their training and have begun planning their journey with CI Adventures.

A walk up Beacon Hill always rewards participants with a fabulous view of Halifax, Wainhouse Tower and, of course, our school from afar. That really gets things in perspective... getting far away from the usual classroom activities, it proves to be great for their mental well-being and perhaps even gives them a brief encounter with some friendly alpacas! The second training day takes groups far over the valley to Norland and the wild lands of Greetland.



# Duke of Edinburgh Award

As well as the expedition section, participants will also be volunteering within their community, learning a skill and also getting involved in a physical activity such as sport or dance. The DofE certificate recognises participants' achievements in all 4 sections. (see [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org) for further details)

We wish them well with all their respective challenges.

Groups will be assessed on their Expedition skills during the spring and summer. Let's hope they get fair weather and have a fabulous weekend to prove themselves within all these outdoor events.

It'll surely be an IN TENTS experience!

Mr Taylor

DofE Awards Verifier Crossley Heath



## 6th Form *Be Inspired*

### Hold The Front Page!

It was a pleasure to welcome back another of our alumni this term as part of our Sixth Form 'Be Inspired' programme.

Class of 2017 student Matt Whiley left Crossley Heath after A levels to study Sports Journalism and is now Media Officer for Essex Cricket.

Matt presented a 'Hold The Front Page' talk & workshop to our Y12 students, who practiced using language to create PR spin for a genuine tabloid story. The students learned loads about all things to do with media & communications as well as how varied the life of a journalist could be!







# Year 8 Geography and Mandarin Field Trip to Manchester

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March, all year 8 students went to Manchester to explore whether it is a world city. The students completed a number of surveys in different locations around the city centre and will complete the follow-up enquiry work in lesson. We were lucky to have a dry but cold day.

Students in 8C, who study Mandarin, spent more of their time exploring China Town and practicing their use of Mandarin, though supervised interactions with shop keepers and members of the public. The students and staff really enjoyed the experience and we look forwards to future field work trips with year 9 and 10 upcoming in the summer term.



# Sue's Farewell



February marked the time we said goodbye to Sue Newham, after 32 plus years of service as a Mid-day Supervisor at a grand age of 75, Sue has decided to retire!

Wishing her all the very best, and we hope she enjoys every moment of the next phase of her life.



# Yr7, Yr8, Yr9 and Yr10 Book Clubs



Writing this on the eve of World Book Day seems very apt...

Currently, Year 9-11 Reading Masters have read 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' and 'Stars and Smoke', which we read as part of the National Teen Book Group, sponsored by Penguin Books. We met after school every Wednesday for four weeks, joining in with the online book discussion and listening to different people from the creative industries talking about their roles – everything from running the Royal Opera House to designing book covers. We also got to meet the author, post questions to other readers and get recommendations for what to read next.

Now we have moved on to our next read (and back to Wednesday lunchtimes) which is 'Klara and the Sun' by Kazuo Ishiguro. It's a fabulous take on sci fi based on a world where every young person has an AI friend and people are 'lifted' to be more intelligent. The narrator is the AI character, Klara, who is far more emotionally aware than most of the humans in the novel! No more spoilers, though .....

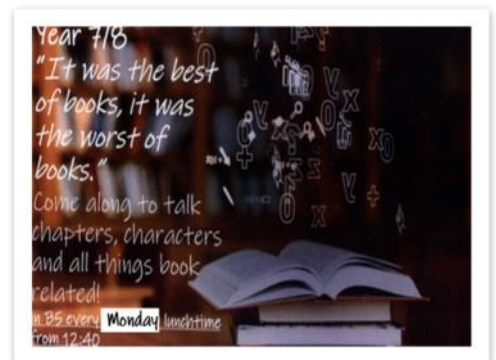
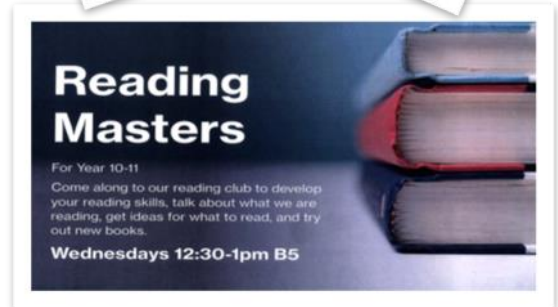
Year 7 and 8 Began the year with a dystopian book by Robert Swindells, 'Brother In The Land'. Set in a town in the north of England, after the bomb, Danny must learn to deal with gang warfare, a sudden loss of laws and looking after his little brother. Lots of discussion about what this world would be like and links to a plethora of dystopian fiction aimed at teenagers.

We are finishing the term with 'The Curious Incident of The Dog in The Nighttime' by Mark Haddon. Another popular choice, especially the chapters using prime numbers! The protagonist, 15-year-old Christopher, discovers his neighbour's dog murdered on the lawn by a pitchfork. He turns detective to uncover the truth, this isn't always easy as he knows a great deal about maths but very little about human beings (he has Asperger's Syndrome).

The group have almost finished their list of '50 Great Reads For Key Stage 3'. If you have any recommendations or want to join, please just come along, new faces are always welcome!

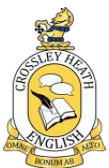
**Reading Masters for Years 9-11 on Wednesdays in B8 (12:40-1)**

**'It was the best of books, it was the worst of books' for Years 7-8 Mondays in B5 (12:40-1)**



## National Teen Book Club

We took part in the National Teen Book Club, which is held online after school, on Wednesdays. We read *Stars and Smoke*, by Marie Lu and joined with other schools each week to discuss and share ideas about what we had read so far. There were also career related presentations from an illustrator, a publisher and the manager of the Royal Opera House, as well as a book talk from the author.

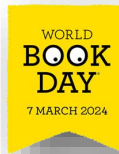


The Yr7, Yr8, and Yr10 Book Clubs at lunchtimes are still running well!





# Library News



World Book Day is always an enjoyable annual celebration of books and reading for the LRC and this year it was enhanced with an expanding programme of events encouraging Inter-House engagement. For full details of all the celebrations, see our World Book Day coverage on pages 8-9 and 14-17.



## Student Librarian Book Recommendations

We had several submissions for our House Short Story Competition through which our students could let their imagination, writing skills and creativity shine. The overall winner (which you can read on page 9) was *The Clawtooth Cliffs Hatching* by Eleanor Wickham of 8D, making Kings House the first recipient of the House Short Story Trophy. Thankyou to all our students who entered the competition, House Points have been awarded to all entrants and you can read a few more of these, along with photos taken on the day on pages 14-17.



### Bite Risk

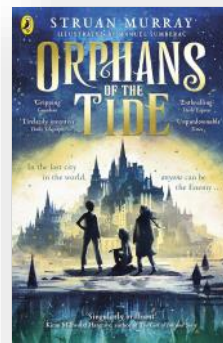
By S J Wills

Sel Archer lives in a normal town with normal residents, except for one night a month . . . When the full moon comes out, almost all of the adults turn into werewolves, and it's up to the young people to protect themselves from danger.

But, as this quiet life begins to unravel, and the Turned start to escape, can Sel and his friends uncover exactly who – or what – is watching their every move, before it's too late?

### Orphans of the Tide

By Struan Murray



The City was built on a sharp mountain that jutted improbably from the sea, and the sea kept trying to claim it back. That grey morning, once the tide had retreated, a whale was found on a rooftop. When a mysterious boy washes in with the tide, the citizens believe he's the Enemy - the god who drowned the world - come again to cause untold chaos.

Only Ellie, a fearless young Inventor living in a workshop crammed with curiosities, believes he's Innocent. But the Enemy can take possession of any human body and the ruthless Inquisition are determined to destroy it forever.

To save the boy, Ellie must prove who he really is - even if that means revealing her own dangerous secret . . .

### The Summer I Turned Pretty

By Jenny Han



One girl. Two boys. And the summer that changed everything . . . Every year Isabel spends a perfect summer at her favourite place in the world - the Fisher family's beach house. It has everything a girl could want: a swimming pool, a private stretch of sandy beach... and two (very cute) boys: Unavailable, aloof Conrad - who she's been in love with forever Friendly, relaxed Jeremiah- the only one who's ever really paid her any attention. But this year something is different. This year, the boys seem to really notice Isabel for the first time. It's going to be an amazing summer - and one she'll never forget . . .

### All The Bright Places

By Jennifer Niven

A remarkable story of friendship, love, and dealing with suffering. Theodore Finch and Violet Markey appear to be unlikely friends. But a chance meeting on the ledge of their school's bell tower, an expression of their suicidal thoughts, gives both a new lease of life. Theo and Violet start to spend more and more time together. First working on a school project, exploring the wonders the state of Indiana has to offer through their 'wanderings'. They grow closer and closer and realise it's the other who can save them from themselves. Each has serious issues that shape their world as they know it, but could love conquer all in the end?

### Bad Magic: A Skulduggery Pleasant Graphic Novel

By Derek Landy, P J Holden & Matt Soffe



Everyone's favourite skeleton detective, and his associates, in full colour! Horror and mystery collide in a small town in the middle of Ireland, with a string of unexplained deaths and a monster on the loose. Better call in the experts.

When Skulduggery Pleasant and Valkyrie Cain drive into Termoncara, they discover a town with a dark past and a people haunted by their own secrets. There is a creature stalking the streets – a creature who delights in cruelty, who feeds off the little hatreds, who grows stronger with every drop of blood spilled.





# World Book Day Celebrations

## Book Exchange

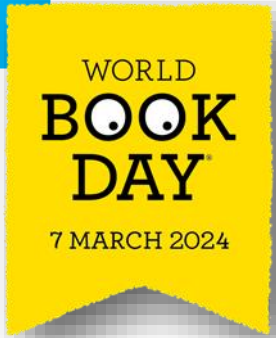
As part of our whole-school celebrations around World Book Day, on Wednesday 6th March, Crossley Heath held a book exchange at break and lunchtime.

Led by our Student Leaders, this is a great way to share a love of reading and discover exciting new books. Plenty of books were donated and plenty taken in return, a fab turnout by students!



World Book Day is a worldwide celebration of books and reading, promoting the concept of reading for pleasure with the message that reading is fun, relevant, accessible, exciting, and has the power to transform lives.

This year, Crossley Heath students and staff celebrated with a wide variety of House events and competitions including Quizzes, a Short Story Competition (*read the winning entry on page 11*), a Book Exchange, and a fun day of Fancy Dress as students and staff dressed up as a favourite fictional book character. Staff members also had the option to wear a t-shirt (expertly printed by our Art department) containing the image of their favourite book to promote this around school on the day.



## Inter House Fancy Dress Competition

From *The Lord of the Rings* and *Pride & Prejudice* to *Alice In Wonderland* and the *Teletubbies*, a wide range of book characters new and familiar were represented by our fantastic pupils and staff who made the event such a joyful and colourful one.

With House Points and prizes awarded- including book tokens, and an impressive trophy for the winner - judging took place in the Main Hall and the results were decided as follows:

- 1st Jack (Kings)
- 2nd Asawir (Porter)
- 3rd Zoe (Porter)



Mrs Hazleton & Mr Hirst presenting the World Book Day Fancy dress Winner's Trophy



Amongst the staff entries, Mrs Hazleton's epic *Gangsta Grannie* costume was judged the best.

The whole school enjoyed the celebratory atmosphere, confirming our collective love of books & reading in general, and we thank all who joined in, appreciating the time and effort involved.





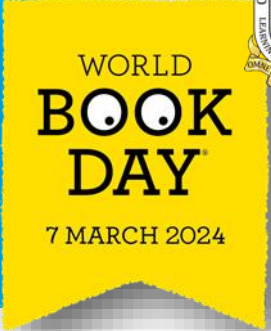


The House Short Story trophy

**Crossley Heath World Book Day Inter-House Short Story Competition**  
**WINNER**

**Title: New Beginnings – The Clawtooth Cliffs Hatching**

**By Eleanor Wickham**  
**8D Kings**



Tall, dark, ominous cliffs. Tiny, leaf-stripped tress clinging to them like dirt sticks under dragon scales. Boiling black clouds, crackling with flashes of greenish lightning. Home, sweet home. You got used to the storm after a while: it was the perpetual weather in this part of the world. For some, it seemed scary and creepy, much like the 'monsters' they though nested inside its labyrinth of tunnels and caverns. Some were smaller than broom cupboards, some were bigger than cathedrals.

I stood at the entrance to the hatchery, a grand space near the heart of the extensive cave system. The walls, peppered with dragon fire burns and empty ledges, almost pulsed with sweltering heat.

“Hark,” cried the dragon sitting on a perch. “A new member of our brethren rises from the shell today!”. I grinned at Navilia, the announcer, and took my place next to the rest of the so-called brethren – three dragons strong (albeit soon to be four) and me: a human, tall for my age but dwarfed by these mythical megaliths.

Everyone’s gaze fell to the creamy egg by Navilia’s side. “Though not born of one of our number, it is clearly a dragon egg and so it shall be our duty henceforth to care for it, educate it, and make a true Cliff Clawer out of it! Any objections?” The others were simply grateful to have a chance to continue the Cliff Clawer legacy, Navilia couldn’t object, and I was the one who found the egg whilst hiking in the straggly little forest below Clawtooth Cliffs. No objections then.

The golden sparkles that were scattered over the shell-like stars in the night sky shimmered in the light of the natural braziers, kept alive by our very own dragon fire. “Keep a constant burn,” I reminded them as the dragons readied themselves to heat the egg to the right temperature for hatching. The flames danced around the egg, cracking it, opening it. A perfect zig zag split the egg. Fragments of glittery shell peeled and shattered and crashed to the floor.

A tiny golden head peeked out of the top of the broken eggshell. “Welcome to the world, little one...” I breathed, awed by the miracle of birth.



### Inter House Book Quiz

All students had the chance to participate in Inter House Book Quizzes during Tutorial period on World Book Day, with a set of 20 multi-choice book related questions created for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.



All answer sheets were tallied up, and the winning House with the most correct answers was: **Kings House**



*See pages 14-17 for more photos  
and Short Story entries*





# Our 160 year Crossley Heath Anniversary Celebrations

Pride in our heritage and the philanthropic principles on which our school building was founded runs stronger than ever and this year is the perfect chance to celebrate this heritage.

We want to bring back the best of our traditions and make our past shine through to the present. We are planning a twelve-month programme of events (Summer Term 2024 till Spring Term 2025) to celebrate the 160-year anniversary of our Crossley Heath school building opening as an orphanage in 1864. Let the Heath, Crossley & Porter and Crossley Heath schools' heritage come back to the fore.

Let us dream big and fundraise £160,000 in our 160<sup>th</sup> year to help us champion the education of our present students and support the most vulnerable in our local and global community. Let us be true to our grammar school imperative for promoting social mobility and being a driver of positive change.

We want to invest time and imagination into our anniversary celebrations because we believe this helps in strengthening our school culture, as celebrating the unique history of our school strengthens the affinity of our students, staff, families, alumni and community to Crossley Heath. We believe this unique school of ours lives long in the heart and so wish our past students, our alumni, to realise how strongly they are still connected to our school, how welcome they are and the positive influence they can have in championing our children of the present.

Therefore, we will be creating a calendar of events inspired by our past (learning from the book 'Crossley Heath School' (2005) by Rose Taylor et al.) and with the potential to become a regular part of our future culture, linking many of these events to fundraising with the aim of raising £160,000 with half to be invested in the children at our school and half going to support the most needy locally and globally through partner charities.

Our calendared events will include:

**Celebrations:** Alumni speeches. Reunion events. School balls.

**Fundraising:** Charity auctions. Fundraising fortnight as a house competition. Legacy plaques and a Philanthropists Roll of Honour for those donating to support our school.

**House Events:** A school talent show, relaunching our school newspaper and restarting a swimming gala.

**Performing Arts:** An annual drama production. Dancing on the South Lawn. Our Christmas carol service.

**Photoshoots:** Historic costume day with staff in mortar boards and capes, students ringing our bells and Head Students writing their names in the clock tower.

**Sports:** Annual Sports presentation. Athletics on the arena. Cricket nets returning to the arena. Fives in the Sports Hall. Lawn Tennis on the front lawn. Veterans 100 yard dash.

**Trips:** Belgium trip to find the memorial to Captain Alfred and camping at Crossley Heath.

Our alumni are at the heart of these anniversary celebrations. **We want to welcome our alumni to visit our school this year. To help us celebrate and fundraise. To share ideas for events and stories of our heritage. To prove how much our alumni are valued I want to invite you to give me a call at school (01422 360272) or send me an email at [d.jones@crossleyheath.org.uk](mailto:d.jones@crossleyheath.org.uk). We'd love to hear from you and meet you. Let us make our 160<sup>th</sup> year one of the most special yet!**

Dean Jones (following a combined total of 45 Headteachers to serve the school since the 1600s )



**CELEBRATE!**







# House Debating Competition

Members of the KS3 and KS4 Debating Society took part in the House Debating Competition on Wednesday 7th February, during which students demonstrated a range of skills including public speaking, structuring a logical argument, rebuttal, offering points of information and listening skills.

Chaired by Mr Coote, the motions proposed were:

1. This house believes that communication technology is making us less connected.

*Proposition: Porter*

*Opposition: Queens*

2. This house would reduce the minimum driving age in the U.K.

*Proposition: Kings*

*Opposition: Savile*



The Judges were Mr Jones, Mrs Hazelton and Ms Johnston, and the results were as follows:

**1st Savile** (Daniel Watkins, Ayan Siddiqui, Sophia Barraclough)

**2nd Kings** (Ibrahim Ahmed, Myra Garg, Yashwi Mehta)

**3rd Queens** (Dani Estephan, Sara Davies, Qudsiyah Mahmood)

**4th Porter** (Katherine Behera, Zoe Wood, Sophie Horn)



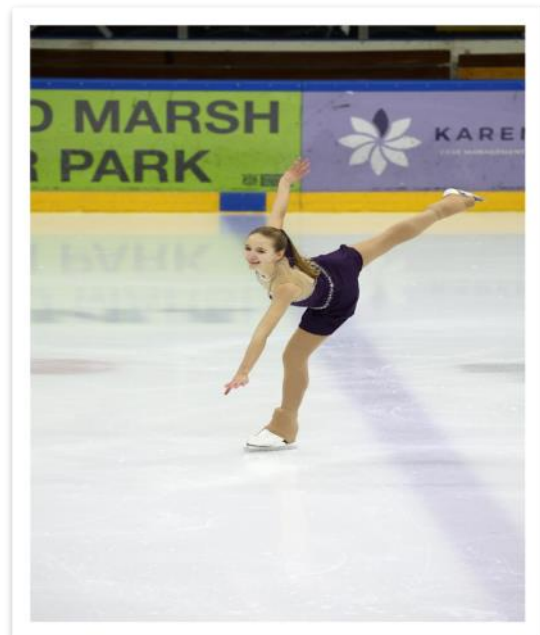
*KS3 and KS4 Debating Society runs every Thursday in L4 from 12.30pm-1pm.*

*All budding debaters are welcome.*



# Zara Blanchard 9C - Ice Skating

Zara Blanchard in Year 9 continues to pursue her interest in figure skating. She started the season competing at National Level 4 free skating. She has competed in competitions in Sheffield, Blackburn and Nottingham. Zara finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place in Nottingham at the Motor Point Arena, narrowly missing a podium position by half a point. Zara's next competition is in Blackpool in April, where she will compete in National Level 5 for the first time.





# Music News 2024

## Erik "Blu2th" Griggs Music Industry

In partnership with Calderdale Music, Calderdale College and the Piece Hall, enthusiastic and passionate music makers and creators were called to apply to take part in an exciting opportunity recently. Working with and learning from an outstanding international music industry expert, Erik "Blu2th" Griggs, sessions were designed to be an insight into the way music is made in the real music industry.

The application process involved producing a short personal statement and submitting a recording which showcased musical talent. The opportunity went out to year 9 and 10 students across all of the schools in Calderdale with only 18 places available. We are delighted the six of our students were selected! Emily Wray, Naomi Muhoro, Tego Marsh, Caitlin Phillips, Akhil Betha and Grace Hobson enjoyed creating a track from scratch benefitting from Erik's extensive experience.

Erik is an American multi-platinum and Grammy nominated, multi-instrumentalist, singer, music producer & songwriter. He has worked with a variety of artists across different genres, from being bass and keys player for Aretha Franklin to collaborations with Eminem as part of Dr Dre's regular in house production team. We are really looking forward to hearing the finished product soon!



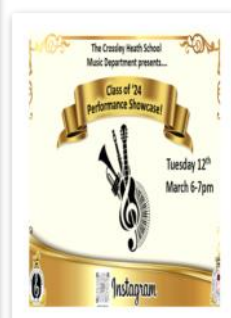
## Music Department Visit to Belgium

## Class of '24 Performance Showcase

At the time of writing, we are just days away from our Concert Tour to Belgium! Students from year 8-11 will be representing the school with concerts set to feature the Big Band, String Group (see picture below), Samba Club, Crossley Brass and our Choir, in addition to soloists. We are also looking forward to the planned excursions including a theme park trip, canal cruise and of course a visit to a chocolate factory!

There will be lots of further opportunities happening in the future for our musicians who are part of the extra-curricular programme. Any student who is interested in joining any of our groups in should speak to Mr Nimmo. We are always looking for new members!

Parents and staff gathered to celebrate the talents of our Year 11 GCSE students. Pianists Jasmine Xu and Milly Craig entertained us with beautiful solo playing and also a lovely piano duet by Eric Satie and Amilyn Anil sang a beautiful Indian Classical piece. Louisa Tuton took the audience away to a lovely 'Summer's evening' on Flute whilst Lakshya Kaushik then transported us to Spain with the 'Sound of the Bells' on Classical Guitar. Jacob allowed several members of the audience to relive their youth with the sounds of Blue Oyster Cult on electric guitar and we were then whisked to the West End for Imogen Dixon and Ruby Rasakumaran's performance of 'For Good' from Wicked. It was a wonderful evening!







## Liverpool GCSE Trip

### ABRSM exams

Well done for all of the following students who have passed ABRSM exams recently.

Liverpool, a city steeped in musical history and cultural significance, became the classroom for a group of eager Year 10 GCSE Music students as they embarked on a memorable journey of exploration.

Their first stop was at the iconic Eleanor Rigby statue, a poignant tribute to the Beatles' classic song and a symbol of Liverpool's enduring connection to one of the most influential bands in music history. Standing amidst the hustle and bustle of the city streets, the statue served as a reminder of the power of music to transcend time and place. Next on their itinerary was a visit to the legendary Cavern Club, where the Beatles honed their craft and rose to fame. Then a photo with the Beatles statue at the Pier Head, a striking tribute to the Fab Four that captures their essence in bronze. It stands tall against the backdrop of the Liverpool waterfront.

Continuing their musical odyssey, the students made their way to the British Music Experience, an interactive museum dedicated to celebrating the rich tapestry of British music history. From the swinging sixties to the punk rock revolution and beyond, they delved into the evolution of pop music through the ages, gaining insights into the cultural forces that shaped its development. They also had the opportunity to play guitars, drums and keyboards which was a real highlight for many.

The culmination of their journey was a visit to a gig at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA), where they were immersed in pop music through the decades. The students loved being part of a real 'gig' and it really brought their studies on popular music alive.

First name	Last name	Instrument	Grade
Karam	Atwal	Piano	1
Sophia	Criscione	Piano	1
Phil	Daniel	Piano	3
Rachel	Davis	Piano	8
Dinuli	Devasurendra	Singing	2
Joe	Fitzsimmons	Piano	5
Katie	Gareis	Singing	3
Oscar	Grimes	Piano	4
Sophie	Horn	Piano	1
Raganvi	Kakumani	Piano	2
Imogen	McNutt	Piano	3
Naomi	Nimmo	Flute	1
Miles	Rowland	Alto Saxophone	8
Prithiv Jith	Shiva Deep	Piano	3
Pragya	Surabhi	Singing	4
Tolisha	Warnakulasooriya	Piano	5

Particularly well done to Phil Daniel and Naomi Nimmo who passed with merit, and Pragya Surabhi and Miles Rowland who passed with distinction. A special mention must also go to Mr Moore (Head of Maths) who despite only taking up piano lesson recently, passed grade 2 with merit!





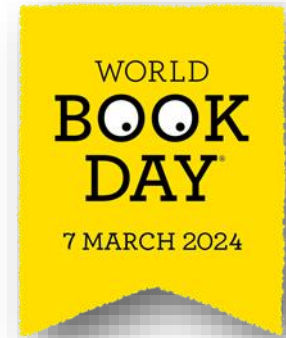
## World Book Day Inter-House Short Story Competition

Title: New Beginnings

Name: Seth Harford

Form: 8C

House: Queens



Class 6E trudged reluctantly into their history lesson and slumped into the ridiculous plastic chairs. 'It's a supply teacher!' Stanley shrieked. Cheers and giggles erupted from the already rowdy class, which faded when the stern, seven-foot figure glided ominously in. 'And what is all this noise for?' the towering figure whispered. Her voice cut the silence like a knife.

'We were just happy we've got a supply teacher, miss,' piped up Erin bravely. 'Our usual teacher's really grim!'

'Nearly as grim as that coat!' someone shouted, and the class burst into hopeless giggles again. Her icy voice cut through. 'I am your supply teacher today. Your new topic is medieval times?'

The class groaned. The low mood continued as she droned on about the Feudal System. A muttered conversation on the third row caused her to say in a sharp, yet cool tone, 'Someone is not listening, and I would like everyone to listen please.' It was a beefy boy named Dave. The supply teacher swiftly floated over to the unfortunate student's desk. She cleared her throat. Dave gave a shout of surprise and leaned back as far as the plastic seat would allow. She snapped her fingers. Everyone blinked and found themselves in a large crop field.

'Wha... where are we?' James shook himself. 'Is this a dream?'

'Oh dear, oh dear, I must stop doing that,' the teacher murmured absent-mindedly, as if she had forgotten to close a gate, not transported a class of ten-year-olds on a suspicious school trip to the medieval times.

A smartly dressed man came up to them. 'Get back to work!' he shrieked. 'You're meant to grow the cabbages, not sit on them!'

Dave decided to butt in. 'Push off, you fat baron!' he shouted.

The man gasped in alarm. 'Take him to the stocks!' he yelled, and two guards threw Dave into a wooden frame. Peasant villagers crowded round. 'Yeah, that's right!' Dave said, relieved. 'Come and get me out of here, you plague-infested lot!' But to his utter disgust, they began pelting rotten food at him. 'Oi!' he cried, 'Stoppit!'

'You'll stay there for 2 hours,' shouted a peasant woman with a worryingly full basket of radishes.

The class were concerned. Their lesson was only an hour - suspicions would begin at school.

'Hey!' Samuel said. 'Where are the girls?' And indeed, they had vanished. 'Over there!' Terry pointed. The girls were escaping the village to become free.

'Why can't we stay here?' a girl called Brittany shouted back to them.

Someone shouted, 'If we stay, the plague will ruin your beauty regime.' That brought them back.

In the confusion, Erin managed to sneak the stocks key from one of the guards and unlocked Dave. The teacher clicked her fingers again and poof! They were back in the classroom- just in time. No one at school suspected a thing, although the class's sudden passion for history was unexplained, as was Dave's smell of rotten vegetables that lasted for weeks.





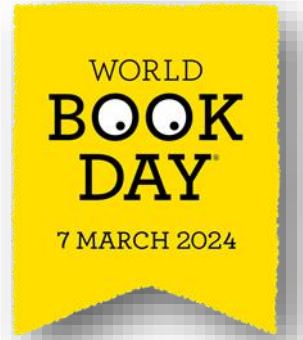
## World Book Day Inter-House Short Story Competition

Title: New Beginnings

Name: Dylan Prieditis

Form: 9F

House: Savile



**For there to be a beginning, first must come an end.**

By the time the ash fell, the tea had gone cold, and Esther had been dead for forty-five minutes. There had been no chance to save her. Her body lay on the crumpled sheets upstairs, surrounded by the beeps of the machines that had tried to draw her back. She was the only thing living in Carson's world; now she was not, now there was no life in his lonely wasteland.

Esther had been like the first flowers of spring: full of life, hope, and joy. It was the illness that stripped her of this. In her final days, her skin turned icy white, exposing a vivid network of blood vessels that strained to pump the blood around her body. And yet despite this, Carson remained like a dog by her bedside, checking her pulse regularly, and forcing hot liquids down her throat. He knew what was to come, but he did not want to face it: the thought of the loss of his dear wife would wind him, and he would spend many nights staring into the abyss and pray to a god he did not believe in. Anything for Esther. But now she was gone.

Carson poured the contents of the mug down the sink and left it on the side- it did not matter; he would not be back. The room glowed faintly red from the light that shafted in through the window, and haunting shadows grew within the corners of the kitchen as the daylight waned. From the hook by the door, Carson picked up his dust mask, and strapped the plastic filter to his face (for the air outside, if breathed in, would choke you), then exited his home through the small wooden door. He did not need to lock it behind him: the thing he found most valuable was now gone.

The dust mask may have protected his eyes and lungs from the ash, but it did not protect him from the wave of grief. Tears burned in his eyes and his throat tightened, making breaths short and raspy. His lungs heaved, and his body fell under the pressure of his own anguish. There he lay, sinking in the thick carpet of dust and ash, as sobs racked his body, and the falling cinders began to bury him.

Just as the pressure above him began to build, Carson's eyes ran dry of tears, and the world around him became visible for the first time. Much of it was the barren land the world had torn itself into, however, a couple of yards away, stood a small blade of green. Carson pounced, tossing the hardening ashes from him, and ran to it. There in the hard ground stood the first fresh shoot the Earth had seen in thirteen years, driving itself proudly from the apocalypse in which it grew.

Carson smiled, "Hello Esther." he said.

*Next to a grave marked "Esther" lay Carson, for there had been no one to bury him. At last, reunited with his dear wife. Around them grew a field of bright blue flowers, and for the first time in forty years, the sun broke through the ash clouds and shone down on Earth, welcoming the new age.*

\*\*\*



## World Book Day Inter-House Short Story Competition

Title: New Beginnings – A New Start

Name: Dani Estephan

Form: 7D

House: Queens

I look down at my watch. That is all to be done. There are no plants, no people and not even a single animal. There is just a basic toxic wasteland. A sea of barren blackness. I was the only survivor in my town. Everyone else was gone. I could not smile any more. I could not eat anymore. Not too long ago this was a haven but now I am a lone survivor in a radioactive world. Nothing was everything; everything was nothing. My clothes are ripped, and all my food was drained. I must walk on to live. I must walk on to start again. I must regenerate all plants in this world. All though it would be peaceful at a fresh start. They were wrong. This is the new start ...



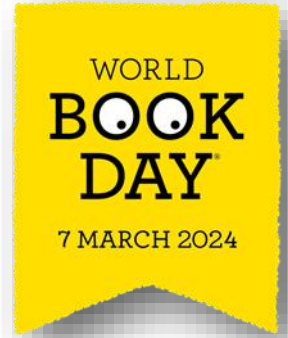
World Book Day Inter-House Short Story Competition

Title: New Beginnings - The Witch

Name: Isla Isukapalli

Form: 8C

House: Kings



The witch hadn't slept for three nights. The first night she'd spent deep in thought, plotting. The second she's spent stooped over her cauldron, muttering evil incantations as she prepared the foul and odorous brew. On the third night, the deed had been done. Without remorse, she took flight once again, glancing back over her shoulder at the wreckage she'd left behind. A merciless cackle escaped her chapped lips, echoing through the atmosphere all around her. The sky burned like a heated opal. Gloom hung like a dark impenetrable cloud. Roaring rapidly upon her loyal broom stick, flaming embers emitting a trail of destruction as she flew. She dipped in and out of the night sky. A breath of melancholy made itself felt, like a chill and sudden gust from some unknown being.

The witch was like no other in every way. She was of hideous appearance, mumbling to herself with a dreary, ghastly smile. Her hair was lank and lustreless, falling around her like strings of rotting straw and black as a wintry night. Her lupine eyes, savage and cunning. Only coming to life when muttering arcane words from a spell. They perched above her hawkish hooked nose, from it sprang a preposterous wart. Prominent with copious amounts of protruding hairs. Her bloodless lips pursed and pale. Not an ounce of repentance or regret etched on her fearless face.

The spell had been cast and had worked perfectly. Days of planning worth the explosive ending. It had caused the desired effect and perished utterly, like a blown-out flame. The spell was still a vivid image, whirling around her head.

"Till death like sleep might steal on me. The beauty like a beast it bites. The blood of a young raven to conquer all."

Deep in thought she mulled over the ingredients and mouthed the words to herself.

"Hairs from a gifted fair child, the tongue of a newt, four foul feathers and tears from an ancient toad."

A potent potion with wicked intent, perfectly planned. An envious wind crept over her like an unwelcome thought. A familiar sight approached which was far from the ruined remains she had previously been to. No longer was the air tinged with rancid smoke, it was as right as a fallen fragment of the sky. This place felt safe and smelt welcoming lie a deep filled apple pie. Through the magnificent tall trees, a house stood still. Small but intricately made with delicate red roses adorned around its door. Nearby a cauldron bubble away furiously. Dismounting her broom stick, the witch leaned over, bent like wand off willow. She carefully stirred the rotting contents. Her reflection looked sinister amongst the liquid. This was no ordinary witch; she was special and unique. She had always been a hideous sight but no she had powers which made her a force to be reckoned with. A new chapter was about to begin...



Mrs Doig showed true dedication to her character Paddington Bear by not only having the most impressive footwear but apparently including a real marmalade sandwich as part of her costume!







# Philosophy Conference – God and the Good

The RS department organised a visit for a group of our year 12 and 13 students to attend a one day philosophy conference that took place on March 11<sup>th</sup> in Manchester.

The conference was led by Dr Peter Vardy. He is a renowned philosopher and now lecturer in religion, ethics and philosophy. He has also written many books surrounding key philosophical and ethical topics such as *The puzzle of evil* and *the puzzle of God*.

The conference was a chance for our students to listen to various lectures surrounding key topics exam topics in preparation for their exam and there was a also a chance to actively get involved in the debate.

The students enjoyed the conference and it was a chance to enrich their A-level exam specification and exam knowledge whilst also having the chance to listen to the views and debates from other schools and colleges that were there.

One student quoted-

*"It was an amazing experience especially with the way we were able to interact and share our ideas with a large audience , it was an open minded experience which increased our knowledge in which we can apply to our exam questions to come" AA Year 13.*

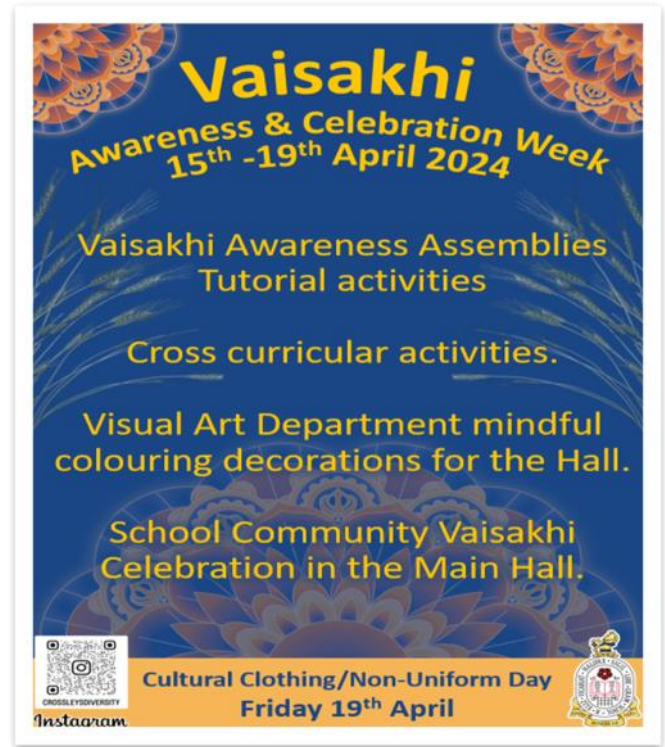
## Lecturer – Peter Vardy





# April / May Calendar

8 April	Staff INSET Day—school closed to students
8	General GCSE NEA deadline (all subjects except Art and Tech)
9	School re-opens to students
10	CHPTA Meeting 7.00 pm
11	Year 7 Parents' Evening (DEF)
12	ABRSM Music exams
12	Eid al-Fitr—Cultural Clothing and Non-Uniform Day
15	GCSE engineering NEA deadline
16-19	Y11 MFL Orals
17	Year 12 Parents' Evening
18	Year 9 Geography Trip
19	Vaisakhi (Sikh New Year)
22	GCSE DT NEA deadline
22	Year 9 French Trip Parents' Evening
22-24	Year 11 Art exam (10 hours over 2 days)
24	Year 9 Vaccinations
24	Year 10 Iceland Trip Parents' Evening
25	Junior Maths Challenge
w/c 29	Year 12 Mid-course exams
1	Year 9 Vaccinations
1	CHPTA Meeting 7.00 pm
6	MAY DAY School Closed
6-8	Year 13 Art exam (15 hours/3 days)
7	Year 10 Parents' Evening (ABCD)
8	Year 10 Geography Trip
11	CHPTA Table Top Pre-loved Sale
13	Year 11 External exams start
w/c 13	Year 10 Food & Nutrition Assessed Practicals start
15	Year 8 Trip Parents' Information Evening
16	Year 10 Parents' Evening (EFG)
w/c 20	Year 10 Food & Nutrition Assessed Practicals start
24	School closes for half term



## Term Dates

### 2024 Summer Term

Closed (INSET): Monday 8th April  
 Re-open: Tuesday 9h April  
 May Day Closed: Monday 6th May  
 Half Term Close: Friday 24th May  
 Re-open: Monday 3rd June  
 Closed (INSET) Friday 21st June  
 End of School Year Close: Friday 19th July

