

# INTOUCH

ST. AIDAN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

NO.26 - FEBRUARY 2023



Welcome to another fantastic edition of InTouch which celebrates just some of the wonderful news and achievements of our staff and students during the month of February. We hope the half term break has allowed you to rest and gather energy for further pursuits this month. As we move into Lent we have the opportunity for reflection, confession and resolution in living our best lives as we look forward to Easter. The nights are getting lighter which gives us a sense that Spring is around the corner.

Take care of yourselves and each other,

Mr Thornton

## Children's Mental Health Week

Earlier this month, as part of Children's Mental Health Week, the ILC team ran interactive lunchtime sessions to get us thinking about our everyday connections.

Among the many activities set up for students to take part in, students had fun listening to music on a record player, which got them discussing songs that can relate too. From Take That to The Sugarbabes, all found music was a great way to feel connected to others, and also as a way of remembering good moments in our lives.

Children's mental health week at St Aidan's reminded those that took part that music in all forms can bring us happiness, relaxation and connectivity.



## FLG take part in RSPB Birdwatch

During the last week of January, students in the Foundation Learning Group enjoyed doing a bird watch as part of their horticulture lessons. This was all in preparation for the RSPB bird watch and the experience was made even more enjoyable with hot chocolate and marshmallows!



## Crochet Club

Our new Crochet Club has proved very popular this term with members from Year 12 to Year 7 coming along on a Friday lunchtime. There has been such a lovely atmosphere for students to chat, make new friends or just enjoy some peace and quiet, and learn a new skill. Some of their progress has been amazing! We were able to start up with generous donations of yarn and hooks from Staff and from The Cone Exchange in Harrogate. In return we are hoping to support their knitting scheme, by making blankets, hats, and scarves to donate to a local Warm Bank. There is still plenty of room for anyone wishing to join Crochet Club – just pop down to PH5 on Friday lunchtime.



Skinted is a Sixth Form-led secondhand clothes sale that has been set up to raise money in aid of Labour Behind the Label. Labour Behind the Label is a charity which aims to protect workers from exploitation and fights for fair pay. The donations of clothes flooded in and the Skinted team organised them into categories including a popular 'branded' section. An auction launched the event in the Sixth Form Café on Wednesday 22nd February and then the 'big sale' followed in the Hatcher Room on 23rd and 24th of February. Students flocked to grab themselves a bargain and the total raised was a whopping £630! Well done to all the Skinted team and huge thanks to Mrs Barron for your support and encouragement.



## Remembering Frank



February 9th 2023 marked four years since Year 9 student Frank Ashtton lost his brave battle against Ewing Sarcoma, a rare form of Bone Cancer. Age fourteen, Frank left behind many friends who are now in their final year at St. Aidan's and will never forget him.

We remembered Frank in Year 13 assembly and at lunchtime, his Form Tutor Mrs Hedges and some of his form friends gathered at the seating area which was built in his memory. They spoke of Frank's great sense of humour, his love of Oreos, X Box, Nandos, Tangfastics and Chelsea Football Club.

Frank's Fund continues to fundraise to improve outcomes for Ewing Sarcoma and can be found on social media.





## Peaky Blinders Treat for GCSE Dance Students

At the end of January, GCSE and A Level Dancers went to see Rambert's Peaky Blinders at the Bradford Alhambra. The students really enjoyed the experience and here are some of the comments they made:

'I loved the theatre experience and how creative the piece was. All the dancers were so incredible.'

'I thought it was so inspirational and loved how they used the props and set to show different scenes.'

'I loved the use of the different dance styles and the costumes were brilliant.'

'I liked how I could feel the connection between the dancers and was able to understand the story even though I haven't watched Peaky Blinders.'

Miss Miller and her dancers have had some other fantastic opportunities recently including Year 10 GCSE Dancers who had a workshop with Northern School of Contemporary Dance. We also thoroughly enjoyed the Year 9 Dancers' performance at Jazz Night this month.



We are thrilled to announce that our major school production for November 2023 will be the joyously uplifting Disney's The Little Mermaid.

Based on the beloved 1989 animated classic, the show is purposely designed to be a treat for all senses, filled with vivid visuals and dazzling production values that offer audiences a refreshed and expanded theatrical take on a beloved, quite sacred piece of cinema. Those now history-etched songs have been revived for the stage version, mingling alongside newer songs by the original composer, Alan Menken, and a new book expanding a few backstories and reimagining certain scenes.

With a host of great characters such as Ariel, Eric, Flounder, Scuttle, Sebastian, Ursula (with Flotsam and Jetsam), King Triton, Grimsby, six Mermaid Sisters, Chef Louis and an ensemble of sailors, sea creatures, gulls, maids, chefs and princesses, there are roles for a large cast supported by a full show band. Auditions for students in Years 9 to 12 and for newcomers to the Associated 6th Form will take place in June. Dates, times, and details to be confirmed nearer the time. We hope that whether as performers or as an audience, you will all want to be "part of our world"!

## Jazz Night

Constance Green Hall was buzzing with excitement on Thursday 9 February as the ever-popular Jazz Night took place.

The evening kicked off with entertainment from Year 9 dancers performing to the brilliant Swing Band's rendition of 'It Don't Mean a Thing if you Aint Got That Swing'. Many more hits followed including a medley of Stevie Wonder songs.

Our Year 12s took the lead directing our younger performers in SAJE (St Aidan's Jazz Ensemble) and the Year 13s provided guidance to those for whom this was their first time performing in front of an audience.

The popular party band Three Strikes shared some funk classics and there were impressive solo performances galore. One worth a special mention was the talented Ben Fearnley who wowed the audience with his stunning performance of My Funny Valentine played on Flugelhorn.

It was a final Jazz Night for our Year 13s who have played brilliantly over the years and we thank them for guiding and inspiring those younger musicians who are starting to shine on evenings such as this.

The evening ended with all the musicians coming together for the spectacular Grand Finale which was received with much applause! Well done to the musicians, dancers, tech team, SAMA and of course, massive thanks must go to our Head of Music, Mrs Elliott who pulled the whole evening together expertly.



## Salamanca with Sixth Form



Year 12 and 13 have been enjoying a jam-packed week of activities in Salamanca and Madrid.

On the first day they met their host families and had a traditional Spanish dinner with them.

On Monday they attended their first language lesson of the week in a beautiful building near the University. This was followed by a walking tour of Salamanca, delivered in Spanish by a local who shared lots of interesting facts and stories about the history of Salamanca. One stop included the monastery where Christopher Columbus stayed and met the Spanish King and Queen.

Other activities included visiting the Cathedral towers for a 360 view of Salamanca, a bull fighting museum and Flamenco dance classes!

The final day was spent in Madrid with a visit to the Reina Sofia Museum which contains one of Picasso's most famous paintings "Guernica" which is 4mx8m!

## Year 12 Geography Field Trip



Earlier this month, 112 Year 12 Geography students visited Leeds on the second of their four compulsory days of fieldwork. They were given a tour from academic Rachael Unsworth (University of Leeds), discussing the regeneration of Leeds and after lunch at Trinity the students practised fieldwork techniques.

## EPQ Showcase

Over 65 Year 13 students took part in a showcase presentation evening as part of their Extended Project Qualification. The EPQ is a qualification that gives students the opportunity to select and research a topic of their choice. This work culminates in presenting their findings and reflecting on their learning from this independent research. Students presented with such enthusiasm and demonstrated such strong knowledge on their chosen topics which covered themes of marketing, cryptocurrency, psychology, war and conflict, the pandemic and much more. A big well done to all the students involved!

## Junior Music Residential



On the weekend of January 27th to 29th 48 young musicians took part in St. Aidan's annual junior music residential in York. The focus of the weekend was making music together and we calculated that we crammed in the equivalent of 10 weeks of rehearsal time throughout the weekend. This allowed the Junior Band and the String Ensemble to make outstanding progress, polishing existing pieces and learning brand new repertoire for a concert on Sunday afternoon.

Being away from home for two nights also gave the students a fantastic opportunity to develop their wider skills, learning to participate and co-operate in line with the school's 'WALK' mission - (Wisdom, Aspiration, Learning well together and Kindness).

It is always a privilege to work with St. Aidan's students and to see friendships developing within the St. Aidan's musical family. As well as making music we found the time to play games, to take part in the traditional 'Aidan's got Talent' show, to go bowling (Mrs Elliott won the staff competition!!!), to hunt treasure and to generally socialise and relax together as well as eating meals and worshipping together.

Students' attitudes and behaviour were exemplary throughout the weekend, and they were a real credit to their families and the school. Thanks are also due to all the staff who facilitated this trip. All members of the music department were there as well as Ms. Johnson, the string teacher but a special mention must be made for Mr. Taylor, Head of Year 7, who gave up a weekend at home with his family to support the trip despite having, in his words, 'not a musical bone in his body'. Thanks also to Mrs McDonald who did so much work behind the scenes to organise the trip.

The concert was held in the Church of the Holy Redeemer. This is an amazing building designed by the same architect as Coventry Cathedral using reclaimed medieval stonework from a 10th Century Church that had fallen into disrepair. Unfortunately, their heating had also fallen into disrepair, but the musicians and audience braved the cold to create an outstanding concert which highlighted the work of the young people, the progress that the ensembles had made and brought warmth to our hearts if not our extremities! Plans are already underway for next year's residential.





## Physics Olympiad



On Friday 27th January, 57 of our Year 12 A Level students sat the BPhO's Online Senior Physics Challenge. The questions are mostly about physics ideas, but also allow students to demonstrate their wider reading and interest in the subject. It is a national physics competition and our school's entry made up over 1% of the entry.

Special mention should go to William Varley, Jerram Bishop and Ethan Cowell who achieved Gold Awards. A further 14 students achieved Silver; we also gained 37 Bronze and 3 Commendation Awards.

Well done to everyone involved – we look forward to seeing what you can do in the written challenge on March 10th!

## Chemistry Olympiad



Best of luck to the 32 of our Sixth Form students who took part in the UK Chemistry Olympiad Round 1 paper earlier this month. Successful candidates will move forward to the Round 2 UK team selection weekend which will compete in the International Chemistry Olympiad this year in Switzerland!

## GCSE Science Live Trip

Earlier this month around 80 GCSE students travelled to the Science Live Event in Sheffield.

The event included several prominent science speakers, including Professor Robert Winston and the chief examiner who gave top tips on examination success. The overall aim of the trip was to generate enthusiasm for science among our GCSE students. The event was fast-moving, exciting and thought-provoking and we hope it was a day our Year 10 students found inspirational.



## Andrew Jones MP Visit



On 27 January, Andrew Jones MP came to school to visit students in STEM related classes. After a chat with Mr Thornton, he joined Mr Wilson's Year 13 Physics class and asked students why they had chosen the subject and where they were going with it.

Mr Jones is concerned with the national shortage in students choosing STEM related careers and spoke of the struggle to fill jobs in this area. He was impressed with the St Aidan's students and commented on their sense of direction - most with a definite plan of how they would use their physics in degrees and careers.

He then moved onto Mr Kirkpatrick's Year 10 Engineering class where the students were making phone stands. He commented on the 'buzz around the workshop' and noticed how the students were learning to problem solve in their engineering work. Mr Jones was impressed at how the Year 10 boys spoke enthusiastically about their work and the prospects that were open to them in the future. They even enjoyed a photo opportunity before he left!

## Oxbridge Offers 2023



The Associated Sixth Form is delighted to announce that ten students have been offered places at Oxford and Cambridge for September 2023. Each university has made five offers. We would like to congratulate the students on their outstanding achievement. It reflects their hard work, impressive academic ability and the dedication of their teachers, whose encouragement and support has helped them to make successful applications.

The students with offers from Oxford are: Thomas Jenner (St Aidan's) Physics, St Catherine's; Isabel Miles (St Aidan's) French and Russian; Ben Mitchell (St John Fisher) Medicine, Corpus Christi; Manuela Passman (St John Fisher) French and Spanish, Lincoln; Ben Roylance (St Aidan's) History and Politics, Keble.

The students with offers from Cambridge are: Ben Chumas (St Aidan's) Nat Sci (Physics), Clare; Ella Colburn (St Aidan's) Geography, Jesus; Matthew Featherstone (St John Fisher) Mathematics, Lucy Cavendish; Euan O'Connell (St Aidan's) Geography, Emmanuel; Malachy Stockdale (St John Fisher) Mathematics, Trinity Hall.

## Year 11 Forum



The Year 11 Forum was held in Constance Green Hall this month and provided an opportunity for GCSE students to chat to current Sixth Formers about the subjects on offer for them in the Associated Sixth Form. The student perspective is a valuable one to have when making important post-16 choices and we were grateful to those in Year 12 and Year 13 who took the time to give their insight.

## Year 7 Art and Insects



Year 7 have been looking at insects and their environment and representing this through acrylic paint and textured mark making. We love the results!

## Park Run Volunteers



These are the regular St. Aidan's volunteers at Harrogate Junior Park Run. They are Seth Kennerley, Martha Kennerley, Kaelin McCooke, Deaglan Bell, Jack Kennerley and Bella Taylor. Between them, they have volunteered on more than 370 occasions. Well done to all of you!

## North Yorkshire Netball



Year 10 students Ella McKintosh and Elena Dickson played netball for North Yorkshire this weekend, as part of the Under 15 squad. With Ella in defence and Elena in centre court, North Yorkshire won the tournament in Bradford making it 3 out of 3 wins for the country since December 2022. Great work girls!

## Yorkshire Cricket Girls



Congratulations to Immy Hartley, Alice Halliday, Winnie McKenzie and India Gooden who have been selected to play cricket for Yorkshire! We are very proud of you all!

## Swimming Superstars



Well done to Year 8 students Nell Carter and Lois Child who have been selected to represent the North East Division at the English Schools National Swimming Championships to be held in Coventry in March. A fantastic achievement – well done girls!

## Note from the Editor:

We love to hear about all our students' successes and achievements (sporting or otherwise) so please do continue to email these into [k.caine@staidans.co.uk](mailto:k.caine@staidans.co.uk) so we can share the good news on social media and in InTouch.



## Basketball News



Our Under 19 Basketball team have done brilliantly making it to the last 16 stage of the Under 19 Dynamik competition. They went out to an outstanding Myerscough team who had made it through to the finals last year and proved to be tough opponents. Our team never gave up showing great togetherness throughout – a point the opposition coach was quick to mention at the end of the game. The boys should be very proud of their achievements. The final score: St Aidan's 58 Myerscough 111

The team: Will Moore, Tom Thornhill, Spencer Huggett, James Lumley, Spencer Johnson, Sam Walker-Taylor, Sam Thornhill, Jools Barton, Josh Mulkeen, Henry Woolven, Tom Dillon, Jack Moore and Morgan Ikpeme.

## Squash News



Congratulations to our Key Stage 4 Squash team who have just competed at the Regional Finals at Skelmanthorpe Squash Club. They beat Manchester Grammar and came second to Shelley College. Well done on this fantastic achievement.

The team are: Thomas Taylor, Thomas Brook, Adam Smith Tommy Simpson and Archie King.

## Hockey National Finals

What an achievement for the Under 14 girls' hockey team, who on 6th February represented St Aidan's at the National Hockey Schools Championships at the Nottingham Hockey Centre.

The team, who were the only state school representatives to compete, were up against some strong opposition from all over the country and fought hard in all their games with one 3-0 loss, two 1-0 losses and a 1-1 draw to come away 6th best team in England!

A massive thank you to Spall Sports for the playing shirts and hoodies, team sponsors The Angels Events and County Steels and a special mention to Harrogate Hockey Club for allowing the girls to use their white playing shirts as a second playing strip. It was wonderful to have words of support from former Olympic Gold and Bronze medalist Alex Danson-Bennett MBE which can be viewed on our school social media platforms.

Well done to coach Miss Goacher and all the girls involved, what an experience they all had - it goes without saying that we are all very proud of you!

The team: Sophie Ryder (GK), Maisie Richardson, Eliza Henry, Yasmin Lovell, Jess Kirk, Winnie Mackenzie, Martha Stoner, Nell Carter, Evie Coe, India Gooden, Rebecca Chester, Ava Peat, Molly Orr and Maisie Havery.



# Cross Country News: King Henry VIII School, Coventry, Relay

These races have become the unofficial national schools' XC relays over their 51 year history and are a superb event with teams travelling from all over England to compete. The standard is extremely high in both the girls' and boys' races, with young international athletes in many of the teams.

Our young boys' team did well to finish 26th out of 43, against teams full of sixth-form runners and our hope is that they'll do better and better as they continue to train and become stronger over the next few years. Our girls' B team were amazing and finished 13th overall and fastest B team. However, the headlines have to go to our girls' A team.

Many schools send their fastest runner out on leg 1, so Elena Dickson (Year 10) did fantastically for the team to finish her leg of the relay in 6th place, before rushing off for a netball trial. With all of the top 10 teams within 90 seconds of each other Elena handed over to Ella Colbourn (Year 13) our 800m superstar who measured her effort really well and overtook 3 teams in the last kilometer of her leg to run the 10th fastest overall. Niamh Robinson (Year 10) on leg 3 set off just behind the 2nd place team and 200m behind the leading team. With a kilometre to go of her run, she took the lead and managed to stretch this lead out to just under 20 seconds over 2nd place Ratcliffe College and 3rd place Upton Hall School. Eve Whitaker (Year 13), European u20 Fell Running Silver medalist, had to try and hold off one of the fastest u17 cross country runners in the country from Ratcliffe College. Though Eve's lead had been cut to just 8 seconds by half-way round the relay leg, she ran the 5th fastest time of the day and held on for the team win against the best school teams in the country. They even ran the 3rd fastest time ever in the history of the race.

Huge thanks to Joanne Day, Harrogate Harriers who is coach to many of the juniors in these teams.



## Dates for your diary

|   |                                       |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2nd March: World Book Day                       | 15th March: Author Visit - Tom Palmer | 29th March: Sixth Form Easter Service |
| 3rd March: Deadline for Sixth Form applications | 15th March: Battle of the Books Quiz  | 31st March: Break up for Easter       |
| 9th March: Careers Evening                      | 15th March: Senior Concert            |                                       |



We hope you have enjoyed this edition of **INTOUCH**.

Thank you for your feedback so far; please do send any further comments or suggestions to Kate Caine ([K.Caine@staidans.co.uk](mailto:K.Caine@staidans.co.uk))