

# INTOUCH

ST. AIDAN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

NO.34 - NOVEMBER 2023



A warm welcome to our November issue of InTouch. Once again, St Aidan's students and staff strive to take every opportunity to allow us all to experience Life in All its Fullness. As you will see from this edition, our school production was a huge success; thank you to all those involved in making it so and to all those who attended. Our year 13 mock examinations are under way this week and we wish all our students the best of luck as they study hard for these. Next week year 8 travel to Ullswater for their outdoor residential; lets hope the weather stays dry and they have a wonderful experience. Our final few weeks are packed full of festive events including the Christingle, our Liturgy, Christmas dinner, carol services, and the annual pantomime to name a few, yet we continue to have a real focus on excellence in the classroom and high-quality teaching and learning for all our students and staff.

I hope you enjoy reading about all the wonderful things our St Aidan's family have been achieving and thank you once again for all your support as parents, carers, staff, students, governors, and members of our wider school community.

Loving Father, thank you for all who are part of our school. Please grant them your encouragement, wisdom and peace.

Strengthen teachers with heavy workloads. May they be firm, yet patient, expecting excellence but forgiving mistakes. May they support their students, playing to strengths, helping with struggles and motivating them to do their best. Please pour out Your blessings upon our whole school community.

Amen

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Aidan Owe".

Headteacher

# The Importance of Blood Donation



Year 13 student Harry Brown is currently receiving treatment for leukaemia and is urging people to do two things that could save the lives of people like him.

Harry says that donating blood and signing up to the Anthony Nolan Stem Cell Register could make the difference between life and death for hundreds of patients, and is calling on anyone eligible to volunteer.

Harry was diagnosed with a type of blood cancer called acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) in July this year, and has been receiving intense chemotherapy and immunotherapy at the Teenage Cancer Trust unit at St James's Hospital in Leeds. He will need a stem cell transplant to achieve a cure for his condition and is dependant on finding a suitable donor. He commented:

"I therefore feel it is incredibly important that the Anthony Nolan Stem Cell Register is promoted to as wide an audience as possible as signing up is something very simple that anyone aged 16 to 30 can do but might just save the life of someone with blood cancer like me.

I also feel that the issue of blood donation requires increased awareness and promotion as I have received countless life-saving platelet and blood transfusions, which can only happen if people donate.

"My message is that you can do something extraordinary – you can save a life by doing two simple things which can make such a huge difference to people like me."

Before his diagnosis, Harry played the tuba with Tewit Youth Band and volunteered as a Young Leader with 16th Harrogate Scouts, as well as studying for A levels in English Language and Literature, Geography and Politics.

He is now taking a break from school while he concentrates on dealing with leukaemia, with the support of his family, friends, and all here at school. We are sending our very best wishes to Harry and thank him for sharing this important message.

To find out more about giving blood, visit the NHS Give Blood website, and for more information about how to donate stem cells, go to the Anthony Nolan website.

# Harvest thanks

A huge thanks to all who donated to our Harvest collections. We received £1482.94 for Christian Aid and 356.2kg of food for Harrogate Foodbank which is just fantastic. We now turn our attention to Christmas and would encourage everyone who is able, to contribute to our Advent appeal for food and household items which will be collected by the Foodbank just before the end of term.

# Remembrance



We marked remembrance week with assemblies, for all year groups, focussed on the centenary of Harrogate War Memorial and learned about the 'More than a Name' project. Historian Graham Roberts has researched the 1163 men and women that appear on the cenotaph. Our display in reception gave us information about just a few of those soldiers who lived close to our school. We will remember them.

# Inter-Faith Presentation



12-19th November marked Interfaith Week. The aims of this week are to strengthen good inter faith relations at all levels and to increase awareness of the different and distinct faith communities in the UK, in particular celebrating and building on the contribution which their members make to their neighbourhoods and to wider society. It also aims to increase understanding between people of religious and non-religious beliefs. Events included inter faith sports, discussions and dialogues, walks and pilgrimages, festivals and celebrations, exhibitions, concerts, and classroom activities. Faith communities across the country took part alongside schools, colleges, universities, local authorities, and many other types of organisations. On 15th November the RS department, as part of the Living Well Y12 programme welcomed Adam, Heston and Anna as representatives of the Abrahamic faiths: Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Each spoke of their individual religious journeys and the impact of faith on their own lives. In addition they addressed an array of questions from students on topics from favourite teachings to how religions respond to the changing demography of our regions. The panel acknowledged their shared beliefs while discussing how their interpretation of religious text impact one another.



# Year 7 Public Speaking Competition

This term, the English Department have been teaching Year 7 about persuasive writing skills and the art of constructing a well researched argument. Pupils have learnt how to form a viewpoint from which to write, the use of rhetorical and persuasive techniques and the impact of their choice of language and style of delivery.

To mark the culmination of the project, children were invited to put their new found skills into practice and deliver a speech at a Public Speaking Competition in front of the rest of the Year Group, teachers and judges. With so many high standard auditions Miss Blackburn, who was coordinating the event, had a really hard task to pick the final 20 speakers.

The competition was held in Main School Hall and produced a highly informative and entertaining morning. Speakers spoke passionately about topics ranging from 'What if Children were in Charge', and 'Fast Fashion' to 'Jeff Bezos' and 'British Stereotypes'.

Three external judges, all with extensive personal experience of Public Speaking, – Fiona Kearns, Kearns Consultancy, Matthew Chapman, Harrogate BID and Rowena Lloyd, KSSD - were extremely impressed with the high standard of delivery and the maturity of children who had only been at St. Aidan's for one term.

They had the unenviable task of choosing a winner and runners up and after much deliberation, during which time the audience were entertained by the West African Drumming Group supported by Mrs Collett, the judges presented Certificates of Achievement to all speakers. They announced Thora Vardy as the overall winner with her powerful and well researched speech 'Helping the World get Better' and runners up Joseph Taylor (What is Perfection?), Eva Hearnshaw (Assassin Bug), Zoe Holt (Ban Homework) and Harry Bowen (What is Climate Change?)



# Poetry Competition

Congratulations to the three overall winners of our competition for National Poetry Day 2023, Grace Leonard (Y9), Noah Kidman (Y10) and Lexi Lewis (Y9). We received a huge number of entries on the theme of "Refuge" and had a very difficult time deciding on the winners – there were so many thoughtful and beautiful interpretations of what "refuge" means. We finally settled on 3 winners, 9 highly commended and 18 commended poems, which we have collected into a beautiful anthology of writing which you can read here.



# Debating Success



The Sixth Form debating team, which consists of Kezia Jackson, Emily Hughes and Seth Pickersgill, took part in the first round of the ESU's prestigious Mace Competition on Friday 10 November. They faced a team from Queen Mary's School, who proposed the motion: 'This house would broadcast court cases in the British justice system.' Our debaters, however, proved more persuasive, convincing the judges that the motion should be opposed. It was a great achievement for the team, who were competing in their first inter-school competition. They now proceed to Round 2, which will be held in January.

# Global Poetry Award

Huge congratulations to Year 13 student Sophie Hardaker who has won a prestigious global poetry award!

She was selected as one of 85 commended Foyle Young Poets of the Year out of over 15800 entries!

The Year 12 writing residential trip to Wales provided the location for Sophie to make a start on what has become award-winning work.

Sophie collected her award at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London last month! What a fantastic achievement!



## GCSE Presentation Evening

It was wonderful to celebrate with former Year 11 students and their families at the GCSE presentation evening this month which was expertly compered by former Head of Year 11, Mr Bean and organised by our much-valued GCSE Exams Officer Mrs Mahoney.

We are extremely proud of this fantastic year group who earlier this year collectively achieved an outstanding set of GCSE results. A reminder of these statistics is as follows:  
 24% of all GCSE grades awarded were grades 9-8  
 41% of all GCSE grades awarded were grades 9-7  
 70% achieved a grade 5 or more in English and Maths  
 0.52 Progress 8 measure  
 59.2 Attainment 8 measure  
 (If you would like further information on any of these measures, they are explained on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Congratulations must go to those who won individual subject awards! They are the following: Flossie Davis, Lucy Morris, Arthur Harrison, Ruby Webb, Isobel Metcalfe, Aleena Roney, Anna Wingrave, Callum Askew, Jasmine Smitten, Aneeka Bhadal, Kate Thompson, Dan Giliker, Lucy Brown, Maja Kowalska, Charlotte Ware, Eliot Green, Molly McClean, Josh Vlack, Willow Clifton-Smith, Robyn Taylor, Harriet Miles, Maisie Twiggs, Annabel Baxter, Rory Carter, Eleanor Adrian Horrocks, Sam Walker-Taylor, Majot Banga, Seren Hill, Holly Bassham, Lola Thomas, Adam Charlesworth, Matthew Allison, Alex Huby, Seren Melling, Beth Abbot, Zoe Adamson, Seth Pickersgill, Sadie Robson, Jack Brierley, Krish Desha-Beerachee

Many thanks to our guest speaker, former student, Cambridge graduate and Economist, Karl Thompson. It was fantastic to hear you reminisce about your fond memories of being at St.Aidan's and your top tips on how to approach life after GCSEs were inspiring!

Thanks too to students Krish Desha-Beerachee, Annabel Baxter and Jack Brierley for your beautiful piano music and to Ewan Buchan for editing a music montage of memories!

We hope staff, parents and carers all had a wonderful evening - our students are lucky to have your support with all they do.



## Maths Olympiad for Girls

Huge congratulations to all the year 12 and 13 girls who volunteered to do this gruelling 2.5 hour paper with 5 challenging, advanced mathematical problems. Well done to each student – what an impressive achievement!

The students who took part were Year 12 students: Beth Abbott, Zoe Adamson, Iris Asbury, Sophie Baker, Zayana Bhatti, Emilt Bodsworth, Florence Foster, Shelly Masawan, Sadie Robson, Aleena Roney and Alessia Talbit Year 13 students: Erin Bullen, Iona Dvies, Leah Helm, Kezia Jackson and Natalia Walker.

## Senior Maths Challenge

The Senior Maths Challenge was held last month. 101 students from St Aidans entered from across Y12 and 13. Of that they achieved an amazing haul of certificates - 41 Bronze, 28 Silver and 6 Gold - 75% achieved certificates which is excellent given that the UKMT award to the top 66% of entries.

The 6 students who achieved Gold are Jerram Bishop, Leah Helm, Stan King, Oliver Dilley and Toby Williams from Year 13 and Kathryn Shores from Year 12. Jerram and Leah both scored 95, making them joint Best in School. All 6 Gold certificate students have qualified for the follow on round - the Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo. Results to follow in December InTouch.

## Year 10 Geography Field Trip



Year 10 GCSE Geography students have been busy completing their human geography field work which forms an essential part of their course. First they visited Leeds to gather data and evidence of a regeneration project taking place on the south bank of the river Aire. They also visited other projects that have taken place in Leeds city centre (including, the Corn Exchange, Kirkgate Market, Victoria Gate, the sustainable community development by CITU), and of course there was time for some lunch at Trinity Kitchen in the Trinity centre! It was a day enjoyed by all and now students are busy presenting and analysing the data they have collected to evaluate whether the project has been successful. Well done everyone - a brilliant day!



# Little Mermaid



A little bit of Disney magic landed at Constance Green Hall last week for the annual school production - and the show was an absolute smash hit! Faced with the challenge of representing seagulls, fish and crabs, Mr MacCallum's production made some bold costume decisions that allowed the characters to come to life, backed by an ingenious screen that gave a very professional finish. The well-loved story of Ariel the mermaid's love of humans was brought to the stage with humour, colour and a lot of joy! Bravo to the cast, orchestra and crew who produced a show that would not have been out of place on the professional stage. The many hours that went into the final production were all worthwhile when we heard the laughter and cheers of the audience. Congratulations to all involved for reinforcing how important the arts have always been - and continue to be - at St Aidan's! The whole cast were incredible in their roles, but special mention must go to Bella Bickerdike (Ariel), Marissa Ramdeehul (Eric), Kate Thompson (Ursula), Joe Capstick (Sebastian), Amelia Moran (Flounder), Katherine Pringle (Scuttle), Angus Hague (King Triton), Brodie Watson (Grimsby), Leah Nicholls (Flotsam) and Lucy Amos (Jetsam).

Huge thanks to the staff who gave so much of their time to make this show happen – as well as Mr MacCallum, we must thank musical director Mrs Elliott, choreographer Ms Miller, singing coach Ms Collett, technician Mr Balme and assistant director Mrs Forsythe. The Little Mermaid audiences were fantastic at each performance and we were thrilled that former Deputy Headteacher Steve Hatcher brought his granddaughter to the matinee - he's pictured here in the room that was named after him!

# Swing Band go to the Ball



On Saturday 11 November St. Aidan's Swing Band had everyone on their feet dancing when they played at the Dementia Forward Charity Winter Ball! The ball, which took place at The Old Swan Hotel in Harrogate, was a fantastic experience for our students. Huge thanks to Dementia Forward for inviting the band to take part - everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves!

# Young Musician of the Year



Congratulations to Year 13 student Alannah Saphir who has won her age category for the Ripon Young Musician of the Year 2023! To achieve this accolade, she played the Carl Reinecke Flute Sonata. She has now been invited to take part in the RIBI Young Musician Competition, run by Rotary International of Great Britain and Ireland, next February. We are very proud of Alannah, pictured here playing flute at our Golden Gala to celebrate 50 years of the Associated Sixth Form.

# Music Mark School

Congratulations to Mrs Elliott and her talented and dedicated department comprising Mrs Leonard, Mrs Collett and Mr Elliott. Together, they have achieved Music Mark certification which officially recognises the high-quality music education provided at St. Aidan's.



## Olivia in School of Rock



Well done to 9Y's drama enthusiast Olivia Swales for her latest venture playing the key role of Summer Hathaway in York Light Youth Theatre's production of School of Rock. The production took place this month and Olivia has been working hard to prepare for the role with rehearsals every Friday evening and Sunday afternoon since June! Great work Olivia!

**Christmas is Coming**  
A feast of Christmas music old and new

**vocalis** St Aidan's School Chamber Choir  
Conducted by Alexander Kyle Conducted by Jo Leonard  
Accompanied by Peter Brand

**St Wilfrid's Church**  
Duchy Road Harrogate HG1 2EY  
Sunday 17th December 2023  
3.00pm  
Adults £12 Students £6  
Under 11s and carers accompanying people requiring assistance free  
Refreshments available  
Scan the QR code for tickets or go to [trybooking.com/sk/](http://trybooking.com/sk/)  
[www.stwilfrids.org.uk](http://www.stwilfrids.org.uk)  
www.harrogatevocalis.org.uk  
Facebook Twitter  
www.harrogatevocalis.org.uk  
Vocalis is a registered charity number 100049

## Grantley Hall Trip



Year 13 Food & Nutrition students had the opportunity to speak to a variety of chefs from the various restaurants at award winning Grantley Hall, including Michelin star chef Shaun Rankin, and were able to recognise aspects of their Food Safety Management curriculum in a real life situation. As well as visiting each kitchen to observe the highest standards of food sourcing, transportation, storage, preparation and service to the table, students were also given a full tour of the hotel, facilities and grounds and a talk from HR advisors about the many different career pathways within the hospitality sector

## Geotechnical Careers Talk

Senior Geotechnical Engineer Ronak Amirhosseiny, from Coffey Geotechnics gave a lunchtime Careers talk to a packed audience of students ranging from Year 9 - 13. Immensely enthusiastic about her job, where no two days are ever the same, she was excited to be talking to the next generation of Geographers, Geologists, Engineers and those wanting to work in the Environmental and Sustainability sectors.

Ronak emphasised that clean water, safe tunnels, towering skyscrapers, and reliable roads are all made possible by civil engineers, and in particular, ground engineers who focus on understanding the properties of soil and rock and how they interact with structures and foundations. She added that with the drive to foster a more environmentally conscious and greener world, ground engineering stands as a pivotal component within the realm of civil engineering and plays a crucial role in shaping a more promising and sustainable future.

## Zak's work at Harrogate Town

Year 11 student Zak Wild spent a very busy 3 days at Harrogate Town Football Club ahead of their game against Swindon Town this month. Operations Director Dave Riley planned a packed itinerary for him, putting him to work in every area of the business including pitch preparation, cleaning the stands and the changing rooms, and making final health and safety checks. Zak had to be sworn to secrecy as he was let in on the final selection of the team while helping with the laundry of the team kit for each player. He even got to role play the part of Manager Simon Weaver - imagining his actions from the dugout on Saturday afternoon.





# Children in Need 2023

On Friday 17 November, we marked Children in Need Day and students in Year 7-11 were invited to come in non-uniform in return for a donation.

Meanwhile our Sixth Form entertained the whole school with their varied and hilarious fancy dress costumes! They were 'off timetable' for period 5 so could play football on the 3G, play board games in the Café or take part in a Kahoot.

In the build up to Friday's fun and games, Senate held an auction in the Café where students were able to bid for some amazing prizes. These included vouchers for local cafes, a signed programme from the semi-final of the Rugby World Cup, having control of the music in the Café for a week, front of the lunch queue passes for a week, a reserved window seat in the library and most popular of all was a minibus ride for 16 to Knaresborough McDonalds (with free chips thrown in!) with Deputy Director of Sixth Form, Mrs Orton

Huge thanks to everyone who donated. The total amount raised was £ 4,433.71 and we will divide all proceeds between BBC Children in Need and Wellspring.





## Joe is Number 1 in England!



Year 7 student Joe Thompson has done amazingly well; after 4 days of competition, he came runner up in the British Junior Squash Championships, eventually losing in the final on the glass court to the Scottish no. 1. He is now no.1 in England boys under 13s.

## Key Stage 3 Squash



The KS3 Boys' Squash team played their first round in the National Schools Championships this month. They won all their matches comfortably showing some amazing skill and talent. Regional round is next up for them. Well done Ted, Harry, Joe, Thomas and David!

## Year 7 Girls' Football Team are Champs!



Congratulations to the Year 7 girls who became the Harrogate Area 5-a-side champions this month. This was a round-robin tournament comprising of 10-minute matches.

## Lois' Latest Swim Success



Lois Child and her swimming teammates have been very busy this month. They have been competing at the Northeast Regional Championships and Lois has had another good medal haul with 7 golds and 1 silver. She's now qualified for a number of events for the British Winter Nationals in December. We look forward to hearing how she and the team get on!

## Year 9 Football



St Aidan's Year 9 boys held their nerve this month going on to win 4-3 on penalties following an incredible 80 minutes of football against Cardinal Heenan. The win is a testament to the team's character and commitment throughout the game.

The Year 9 boys are now in the top 64 teams nationally - what a performance!

## Football at Bolton School



The Year 7,8 & 9 boys' football teams travelled to Bolton this month to play a block fixture. Year 7s a draw and a loss, Year 8s won 4-1, Year 9s lost 6-2. Well done to all who played!

## Netball News

Well done to these netballers who this month competed in a county round of a national school competition this month at Ashville. The Under14s came 5th - winning the 'fair play' award and the Under 16s came 3rd.





## Under 18s Hockey

The Well done to the U18 girls' hockey team who were up against tough competition at the Tier 3 Yorkshire Semi-Finals this month.

The girls were unlucky to come away with just a 1-0 loss against Hill House, a 4-1 loss against Hymers College with a brilliant goal scored by Coco and an epic 5-1 win against Wakefield Girls High.

The girls did themselves proud and played the best hockey they have ever played, including some excellent saves by birthday girl, Freya. A special mention to Libby, Bea and Maisie who stepped up at last minute so we could field a team.



## Year 11 Football

It was a nail-biting win on penalties against a strong St John Fisher side for the Year 11 boys' football team who have progressed through to the next round of the Area Cup! Well done to all who played in freezing conditions.



## Cross Country News

All 6 school cross country teams had qualified from the county races to compete at the North East region round of the English Schools' cup. All teams ran well, with Niamh Robinson 2nd in the senior girls' race leading them to a team 2nd place and qualification for the national finals. The junior boys' team also qualified for the national finals, finishing 3rd and lead home by Isaac Alker. Intermediate Boys', Senior Boys' and Junior Girls' teams all competed very well but narrowly missed qualifying, with 4th place team finishes. Huge thanks again to 'Endless LLP' for donating the costs of taking teams to the national finals in Suffolk in early December.

Running club continues every Tuesday and Thursday lunchtime, with new runners always welcome to come along.

## Christmas Dates for your diary

Fri 1 Dec	Year 7 Panto Trip	Wed 20 Dec	Associated Sixth Form Christmas Liturgy Service for students CGH
Sun 3 Dec	Chamber Choir at Light up a Life Service	Thur 21 Dec	St. Aidan's Carol Service, Christchurch
Mon 4 Dec	Year 8 Ullswater Trip	Fri 22 Dec	Year 7 Christingle Service CGH
Sat 9 Dec	St Aidan's Teachers' Choir perform at St Edmunds, Roundhay	Fri 22 Dec	School breaks up for Christmas
Sun 17 Dec	Vocalis and Chamber Choir concert St Wilfrids		



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))