

INTOUCH

ST. AIDAN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

NO.35 - DECEMBER 2023



A warm welcome to our final InTouch of the year. As you read through this edition you will see all the amazing adventures and opportunities our students have been given since we started the academic year back in September.

On behalf of all the staff at St Aidan's I wish you a peaceful Christmas and hope that you and your families get time together which is joyful and filled with love. We look forward to welcoming all students back to school on Tuesday the 9th January 2024.

We thank you Lord, for this term. For our challenges, our successes, and the mistakes from which we have learnt. Be with us as we spend our time with family and friends. Give us strength and courage to do what is right: to be witnesses of our faith. These holidays help us to appreciate what others do for us, to give time and effort to help others. To be peacemakers in our family. Keep us safe in our activities; give us good rest and good fun. Bring us back refreshed and ready for a new term. We thank you for our classmates, teachers, parents and a community that cares for us. May we always be conscious of you in our lives.

Amen

Headteacher

Year 8 in Ullswater

During the first week of December, Year 8 departed for their Ullswater residential. With bags packed full of warm clothes, they prepared themselves for what would be an incredible experience.

Staff and students stayed in two centres, one based in Ullswater and one across the lake in Howtown. On arrival, the Year 8s experienced the tradition of a bracing dip in the lake and much more adventure was to follow. With clear skies (most of the time) all enjoyed kayaking, raft building, hill walking, gorge walking and much more. There was home-made food, new friendships formed and some stunning scenery to enjoy.

Thanks must go to all the staff that organised and accompanied our students enabling them to have a trip to remember.



St. Aidan's Festive Band

This month St. Aidan's Festive Band were invited to perform some traditional Christmas classics at the new Yorkshire Cancer Research centre at Hornbeam Park as part of their Christmas event.

As part of the charity's Christmas campaign, visitors were invited to dedicate a star to show support for people affected by cancer this Christmas. Dedications could celebrate someone who has recovered from cancer, thank those who have shown support, recognise someone going through treatment or thank those working in cancer research.

Mr Elliott and the band were thrilled to meet TV presenter and journalist Christine Talbot at the event and were treated to some festive nibbles after their performance! Well done to everyone who took part!



Light Up a Life

The St Aidan's Chamber Choir wrapped up warm to perform at St Michael's Hospice on Sunday 3rd December as part of the annual outdoor Light up a Life service. It was a very moving occasion as ever and always means so much to the hundreds of people who attend.



Junior Choir

Singers from St. Aidan's Junior Choir brought Christmas cheer to the residents at Berwick Grange, a local nursing and dementia care home this week. The students sang traditional carols and other Christmas songs and many residents joined in with enthusiasm.



Senior Maths Challenge

Textile work by Year 10



The Senior Maths Challenge was held this term. 101 students from St. Aidan's 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 qualified for the follow-on round - the Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo. They took part and all 5 obtained a certificate with Jerram Bishop (Year 13) achieving a MERIT which means he was in the top 25% of entries. This round was open only by invitation to those students who excelled in the Senior Maths Challenge, putting all 5 students in the top 11% of students nationally to even qualify for entry. Jerram's result puts him in the top 3% of the country overall. Congratulations everyone!

Well done to Year 10 Textiles students who, as part of their design development lessons, have shown amazing creativity and experimentation in generating ideas for their jackets.



Post-16 choices

One important aspect of Year 11 is making applications for post-16 choices, whether students are considering moving on to a sixth form, starting a course at college, or beginning their employment journey through an apprenticeship. The careers team have thoroughly enjoyed working with the Year 11 students this half term within assemblies, extended form time presentations and activities, and individual careers appointments. We will continue to support the students as we move through the rest of the academic year, with the aim of supporting them to make an informed decision about which post-16 pathway may suit them best, both in terms of individual learning style and longer-term career aspirations.

Students are welcome to visit the Careers department during break and lunchtime when we return to school next term when Careers staff will be on hand to offer further information, advice, and guidance. Alternatively, they can contact us on: 01423 818534 or careersstaff@staidans.co.uk



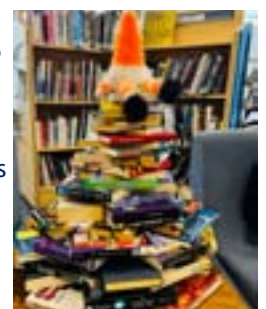
FLG Mosaics



Well done to the Foundation Learning Group who produced these wonderfully accurate mosaic self-portraits. Mrs Connell was very proud of how hard everyone worked and we all think they capture you perfectly!

A Tree of Books

The Library has been spreading Christmas cheer with cosy festive reads and Christmas quizzes. Origami Club has been recycling damaged books into lovely tree decorations.



Year 8 Christmas Card Competition



Year 8 students took part in a competition to design the St Aidan's Christmas card. It was another year of fabulous entries and the art department staff struggled to narrow it down to a final few. In the end Martha Sherwood's beautiful coloured pencil drawing won with its great use of colour and layering. There were 18 students awarded commended or highly commended who narrowly missed out on first place. Well done Year 8!

Christmas Decorations by Year 10 English

Year 10 English students have been busy creating brilliant decorations based on A Christmas Carol, the 19th Century text they are studying for GCSE English Literature. They had a week to produce the decorations and had to show their knowledge of the text using quotations. A special mention must go to Hope Garnham who made a 3D model of Scrooge's counting house which took her 8 hours! Mrs Dover was so impressed that she wanted to display it in main school reception.



Year 9 Gingerbread House Competition



The annual Gingerbread House Competition is one of the highlights of the year in the Food department. We see teams from each of the Year 9 forms compete to create the most elaborate and creative designs. The students began their gingerbread mission on Monday the 4th of December with a visit from the master baker Mr James Hirst of Hirst's Bakery in Knaresborough. Mr Hirst talked the teams through the ingredients and methods of making for both a successful biscuit dough and royal icing. He then demonstrated the skill of house construction and decoration. The result was stunning. Monday the 11th saw the teams demonstrate their ability to bake their creations and on the 18th of December the competition concluded with outstanding final creation and Mrs Dover, Mr Alker and Mr Hirst had the most difficult task of judging. Winners were 9Y - Verena Sorial, Annabel Tiffin, Lexi Lewis, Eva Fox. Second place - 9C Harriet Jones, Lucy Dixon, Kiki Phong, Lois Lakin. Third place - 9W Sophia Hodgson, Bethan Askew, Ava Summerscales, Sienna Fuller.

Christmas Lunch



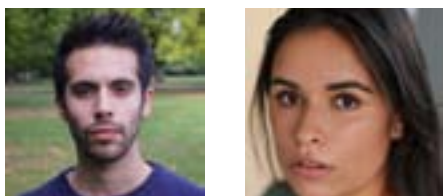
Huge thanks to our wonderful catering team for providing the whole school with Christmas lunch with all the trimmings and Christmas Crackers for everyone - staff and students loved it! Mrs Dover enjoyed sharing a few jokes with the Year 8s!

Narnia Star Bethany



Well done to Year 7's Bethany McDonough for playing the main role of Lucy in Narnia the musical with St Peter's players, an amateur dramatics group based at St Peter's Church in Harrogate town centre.

Alumni star in Harrogate Panto



We were delighted to learn that two former St. Aidan's students are starring in Dick Whittington at Harrogate Theatre.

Naail Ishaq and Faye Weerasinghe (both aged 29) are bringing thigh-slapping humour to the lead roles – the last time they performed together was at St. Aidan's. They both studied Performing Arts in the Associated Sixth Form with Miss Miller who has fond memories of the New York trip with the pair of them.

Panto for Sofia



Well done to Sofia Dunbar, 8D who has just finished playing Princess Aurora in Sleeping Beauty with The High Timers, an amateur dramatics society in Boroughbridge. Sofia had been rehearsing three times a week for the pantomime since September and it was her first lead role with her also singing her first solo. Great work Sofia!

Staff Choir Perform for Charity



St. Aidan's Staff Choir performed at a charity concert at Lidgett Park Methodist Church in Roundhay, Leeds this month. The choir which only formed 'for fun' at the start of the Autumn term have been practising hard for this event. They sang two Christmas songs on their own; White Winter Hymnal and Total Praise, before joining four other choirs for some Christmas classics! All proceeds from the event went to St Gemma's Hospice in Leeds. Those taking part included various teachers and support staff from all departments around school and all thoroughly enjoyed the experience!

Year 7 Panto Trip

Year 7 students (together with invited upper school guests and Mrs Dover) enjoyed a visit to Harrogate Theatre' traditional family pantomime at the start of December.

After a beautifully sunny walk across a snow covered town centre, we took our seats for Dick Whittington, a show full of songs, dancing, corny jokes and, of course, custard pies.

A great time was had by all and it's fair to say we raised the old roof of our local theatre when we all joined in with the obligatory "Oh no it isn't's!"

A fine way to kick off Christmas at St. Aidan's.

Eco Club give advice



Well done to Eco Club who this month created a presentation for Mrs Dover about how they think we can 'run' our school more sustainably. Mrs Dover has taken all the information very seriously and we will update everyone on what actions they have taken in the new year.

For students considering entry into the Associated Sixth Form in September 2024, we warmly invite you to book a place at our

Information Evening

Thursday 18 January 2024, 5.30pm
St. Aidan's Church of England High School Harrogate

For further information and to book your place please visit: staidans.co.uk or sjfchs.org

ASSOCIATED SIXTH FORM
ST AIDAN'S & ST JOHN FISHER, HARROGATE

What you do today... changes your tomorrow

Congratulations School Councillors!

We re-launched the school council this academic year and have a different structure to previous years.

We have Year Councils for every year (two students from each form). From these Year Councils, two students represent the Year group at the School Council. The councillors were all elected by their forms.

This year so far, all the Year councillors have held form meetings and fed back to the Year council where they discussed issues with their Head of Year. They then decided on issues for the two student councillors to take to the Student Council.

The Student Council met with some members of the Senior Leadership Team (Mrs Gee & Mr Addison) on Monday 11th December and discussed issues surrounding changes to school routines, catering, uniform etc.

Well done to the following students who are representing their Year group: Year 7 – Joe Taylor and Lottie Barley, Year 8 – Sacha Robinson and Charlotte Lachman, Year 9 - Theo Webb and Annabel Tiffin, Year 10 - Noah Kidman and Isla Gouldson and Year 11 – Athena Vieira-Neves and Febin Binish. They will all receive support from our Sixth Form Senate.

Carols at Christchurch

The Carol Service at Christchurch is always a special evening, marking the start of Christmas for our school community and we are blessed to be welcomed there each year. This is a traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols, involving Junior Choir, Senior Choir and Chamber Choir. This year was no different, where the congregation were treated to a variety of carols and traditional music including Chamber Choir's rousing rendition of Angels from the Realms of Glory featuring a piano duet accompaniment from Jack Brierley and Krish Desha -Beerachee'. A highlight of the service was hearing all choirs sing together for the joyous contemporary carol 'Immanuel'. With readings and prayers from staff and students, we would like to thank all involved and our Lay Chaplain Liz Shores who has worked tirelessly during this festive period to provide us all with some wonderful opportunities to worship and celebrate Christmas together.



Chamber Choir and Vocalis



Chamber choir performed brilliantly to a full audience alongside local adult choir Vocalis in their joint Christmas concert at St Wilfred's church on Sunday 17th December. Each choir sang pieces on their own and then came together for two joint times conducted by Mrs Leonard and Vocalis director Alex Kyle. It was fabulous for the students to sing alongside more experienced singers including our previous Head of Music Mark Pallant. The concert also featured our talented accompanists Alannah Saphir, Jack Brierley and Krish Desha-Beerachee.



Year 7 Christingle

Year 7 ended their first term at St Aidan's with a wonderful Christingle service where parents were invited to join the year group for prayer, readings, drama, dancing, songs and carols. The Year 7s were thrilled to be taking part in the Service which explained the meaning behind Christingle: the orange represents the world, the red tape reminds us of God's love, the sweets remind us of the good things God has given us and the lit candle reminds us of Jesus, the light of the world. We congratulate our Year 7s on a fantastic first term at St Aidan's and wish them and their families a peaceful Christmas.

Associated Liturgy Service

Year 12s from across the Associated Sixth form gathered in Constance Green Hall for the Associated Christmas Liturgy Service. This was a time for worship, readings, music, and an opportunity to reflect on what is the true meaning of Christmas. It was wonderful to see our Year 12s come together at the end of their first term in the Association and we wish each one of them and their families a peaceful Christmas.



Swimming Success



Lois Child in Year 9 has been competing at the Swimming Winter Nationals this month. Following a great week of results, she then topped it off with making the Youth Finals for her main event – a great achievement which wasn't expected as she was competing in the '17and under' age group!! She went on to swim the 6th fastest time by a 13-year-old in British history! Amazing news Lois!

Sam Trains with England



Congratulations to Sam Alker in Year 10 who attended a 4 day England training camp at St George's Park a few weeks ago. He was invited after being watched over several months while playing for Leeds United. What a great achievement – well done Sam!

International Gymnastics News

We were excited to learn that Annie Pickersgill (Year 10) and Amy Lever (Year 7) competed in an international gymnastics competition in Frankfurt this month. It was a great experience for the girls and their first international competition against teams from USA, France, Germany and many others. We are delighted to report that the team from Harrogate Gymnastics won – great work everyone!



Squash News



The KS5 Squash team played in the first round of the National schools Squash competition and qualified for the regional round in Jan. Well done to everyone involved! They are: Adam Hope, Max Brown, Archie King, Stanley King and Pierce Rosney.

Under 15s Boys' Football Round Up

The Year 10 Boys' Football Team had another successful run in the English Schools Competition making it to Round 5 for the second year running. Round 1 - won 7-1 v Thirsk, Round 2 - drew 4-4 AET v QE and won 9-8 on penalties, Round 3 - won 5-1 v Brooksbank, Round 4 - won 5-3 v Acklam Grange and Round 5 lost 4-1 v King James. Well done to all the team!



Sixth Form Football News

The Sixth Form Football teams have both had great starts to the year. The 1st XI made it through to the 4th round of the ESFA Cup beating Thirsk 7-1, Garforth School 5-2 and Penistone 4-2. They got narrowly beaten by Roundhay School in some of the worst conditions Mr Strover has ever seen a football match being played in. In the County Cup they are through to the QF after wins v Thirsk and Ermysted's. They play Richmond after the Christmas holidays. The 2nd XI have done incredibly well to make it through to the last 16 in the ESFA 2nd XI Cup. They travelled up to play Royal Grammar School Newcastle and had a great afternoon against some tough opposition coming out 2-1 winners. They were meant to play Maltby academy in Rotherham, but they conceded the match. The team are playing Manchester Grammar School in the last 16 looking to secure a QF spot.

Dates for your diary

Mon 8 Jan	Staff Training Day	Fri 19 Jan	Year 7 Quiz (TBC)
Tue 9 Jan	Students return to school	Thu 25 Jan	Junior Music Residential
Wed 10 Jan	Year 11 Mocks begin	Wed 31 Jan	Deadline for External Applications to Sixth Form
Thur 18 Jan	Associated Sixth Form Information Evening		



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)