



NHGS NEWS 2018/19: ISSUE TWO

CHRISTMAS

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Seasons Greetings to all our readers! What an incredibly hectic term it has been, not to mention an astonishingly busy finale in the last week. I hope that like me, you feel ready for the holiday and whatever celebrations you might have planned. Personally, I love the run-in to Christmas here at NHGS, the PA's Fayre, the hamper competition and raffle, the Carol Services, Christmas Dinner and the end of term concerts are all such important cornerstones of our sense of community and it has been lovely to see so many students, parents and staff attending and enjoying these activities. I wish you all the merriest of Christmases and a happy and successful New Year. **Mr Fisher**



NHGS VISION

Mr Fisher, Principal

In the first newsletter of this year I introduced everyone to our new Vision Statement. Visions, by their very nature, are designed to be challenging, almost to the point of impossibility, but they should help us to know what we are aiming for and inspire us to strive to get there. In our strategic Christmas Tree (see below), Vision comes at the top of the tree but it has to be underpinned by broader, more solid sections. Directly under Vision, comes Mission. It is a little more tangible than Vision and indicates the main trunk-route (sorry!) through which the Vision might be achieved. In our case, our Mission Statement to support the delivery of our Vision reads, "Our Mission is to be a school where our behaviours create excellence."



It was Aristotle who first pointed out the importance of repeated behaviours when he wrote what has been translated / paraphrased as "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act, but a habit." Most modern manuals on Leadership and Management agree, although they rarely put it as pithily.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act, but a habit."

Our top performing students last year at both GCSE and A Level did not succeed simply because they were clever and did well on the day of the exams.

Rather, they developed excellent study habits over several years, repeatedly doing their work in class and at home to the best of their abilities, repeatedly revising and revisiting their learning to embed it into long term memory. That is how and why the relevant knowledge was available to them when they needed it. Similarly, the best teachers have clear routines and consistent practices which scaffold students' struggles with challenging content, concepts and skills. Repetition and consistency create security and conditions of trust, in which learning can take root and flourish.



The behaviours we particularly promote in school are the ones described in our Ethos Statement, above.

As I am sure you will recall, our 3 Es are being Enthusiastic, Enquiring and Engaged, our 3 Cs are being Confident, Co-operative and Creative and our 3 Ms are being Mannerly, Motivated and Mindful. Students (and staff) who adhere to these guiding principles of how to conduct themselves (repeatedly!) in our school are the ones who reap the rewards of their excellent habits: through great exam results, yes, and even more importantly, through having great jobs/careers, and great lives – which is ultimately what our Vision is all about.

WELL-BEING PART 2: How often do you get a healthy night's sleep?

Mrs Booth, Well-being & Engagement Officer



If you don't feel like you get enough sleep on a regular basis, you're not alone. According to the World Health Organisation, two-thirds of adults don't get the recommended eight hours. And regularly getting less than six has a significant detrimental impact on our health: it doubles our cancer risk; it's a determining factor for Alzheimer's; it raises our blood sugar and blood pressure, hardening our arteries and making us feel hungrier; and increases our chance of developing depression. That's a depressing thought in itself! So, why are we the only species on the planet deliberately depriving ourselves of sleep? Could GP practices prescribe sleep to all of us as a preventative treatment?

Matthew Walker, Professor of Neuroscience and Psychology and Director of the Sleep and Neuro-imaging Laboratory, has researched this for twenty years and published the brilliant 'Why We Sleep' to get us to think again. He makes an impressive case for the power of sleep which, he says, enhances all our major organs and particularly the processes of the brain. It enhances our capacity to learn and to transfer that learning to our longer-term memory. So, eight hours' sleep is also crucial for our students in this relatively new educational climate of end-of-course external

assessment. Gone is the modular approach of learning, assessing and banking the coursework grades; most of our students will sit about twenty-five exam papers in May/June of year 11 where the learning from years 7 to 11 will all be tested. Moreover, at A-level the majority of marks will be awarded for end-of-course exams following two years of study. Excellent memory function will play a vital part.

Each year we measure year 7 and 10 students' opinions about their well-being through Public Health England's Emotional Health Needs Assessment, which this year tells us that 69% of students report 'I sleep okay'. This is slightly better than the Calderdale average of 65%, but slightly worse than our students the previous year when 76% reported this. I regularly work with our students on their sleep routines, either one-to-one or through poster campaigns around school.

Perhaps it can be a Christmas present for the whole family that we make a promise to ourselves to establish a healthier sleep routine, not only to help the students embed learning from lessons into their memory, but also for its long-term physical health benefits for us all. Merry Christmas!

69% OF NHGS
STUDENTS SAID
"I SLEEP OKAY"
- down from 76%
on last year

NHGS recommends the following from the latest scientific research on sleep:

- ☐ Go out in daylight to enhance the circadian rhythm.
- ☐ Have a regular bedtime to help the body clock, and aim for eight hours.
- ☐ Get regular physical exercise so the body and mind are both tired.
- ☐ Avoid napping, caffeine and blue light on screens after school.
- ☐ Ensure the blue light filter is activated in the evening on phones and tablets.
- ☐ Set aside thinking time after school so that anxieties can be dealt with.
- ☐ Have a relaxing hour-long wind down before bed with nothing stimulating, eg homework, phones or gaming. Reading, family TV, chill-out music or a warm shower are preferable.

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT - MRS QUIGLEY

For each newsletter, we are going to shine a spotlight on a member of the NHGS Leadership Group. For this issue, we will feature Mrs Quigley. Mrs Quigley graduated from Liverpool University with a BSc (Hons) degree in Zoology. She moved to NHGS as Head of Biology in 1998 and also took up a pastoral role within the sixth form team in 2007. She was appointed as Director of Sixth Form in 2010 and a member of Leadership in 2018. She enjoys walking her two dogs, watching rugby league and attempts to read a chapter of a book each night!

Q. Part of the NHGS Vision is to be a school where the students develop skills, knowledge and attributes to navigate life with confidence. Do you think we are achieving this?

As Head of Sixth Form I feel that I really do see the fruits of the labour that has gone on throughout the school. We are sending our students out to a rich variety of courses, apprenticeships and employment. It is not just the academic achievements that make our students standout, but what else they bring. I truly believe that as a school we embrace our motto Living to Learn, Learning to Live.

Last week Mrs Manley published the extra-curricular booklet that went on for 14 pages! Our commitment to "developing the whole person" continues into the Sixth Form with both our core enrichment programme and optional courses.

Q. The Vision also talks about students setting courses of their own choosing. Do you think this is happening?

Last year we sent 100 students to over 35 different universities and saw an increase in the uptake of higher level apprenticeships. Students are making informed choices and decisions for themselves.

Sometimes students need some time to review their options, and it's important to understand that this not a bad thing. This year, I have written over 20 further applications for last year's students – we see this as a strength that they have the confidence to take a year to make the correct decision for them.

It's our role to support our students to make these informed and independent decisions.

I've recently received a letter from a former student who took the decision to change her A-level options at the end of Y12, effectively restarting her study. In the letter she thanked us for our support following her decision.

Q. You mentioned an increase in the uptake of higher level apprenticeships. Can you tell us more?

We've definitely seen a shift in the destination landscape, with these higher-level apprenticeships establishing themselves as a credible alternative to university degrees, and for some students it's the right path.

Only last week I had a student literally bounce into the office to tell me he had got his placement at KPMG after a very thorough interview process. Expectations are high for these places, and competition is very steep. As I mentioned, it's not just about academic success, it's about the other skills and experiences these students can talk about in their applications and interviews.

Q. How do you see the future of the Sixth Form?

Local post-16 education is changing with a number of schools being forced to close their Sixth Forms or work in collaboration to maintain the breadth of courses on offer. We are fortunate that we are still able to offer the full range of courses with all but one subject being taught in house.

We know that students have a choice of where to go after their GCSEs, but we are passionate that our Sixth Form offers something special - from the choice of 25 courses, teaching excellence, well-being and student support plus the enrichment opportunities developing those all important leadership skills working with our younger students.

We have recently interviewed all Year 11 students and we are really pleased such a high percentage are indicating that they are likely to stay with us for their A levels.. We have also received over 200 external applications already. We are bucking both local and national trends in that our sixth form is absolutely thriving!

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT - MRS QUIGLEY - continued

This is a quote from one of the year 13 students who left in the summer.

My time at NHGS was a very happy one, which never fails to evoke warm memories when I look back upon it. Although my positive experience was constructed by numerous aspects of school life, it is primarily the hard work and extra effort put in by teachers and other members of staff that stands out for me. From being given extra reading material by subject teachers to maximise my own personal interest in the subject, to the endless backing that came from the support staff, my form tutor and the sixth form team - which enabled me to grow as a person and work through my own difficulties - I will forever be thankful for the kindness shown, and will miss the family nature that made NHGS such a wonderful school to be a part of.

SIGN LANGUAGE COURSE - SIXTH FORM OPTIONAL ENRICHMENT

A group of Year 12 students have fully engaged with an optional Sign Language Course this half term. Some students share their experience of the course :

"Sign Language is a course that lasts an hour a week over a 5 week period. We've studied many aspects of language ranging from food to emotions. We started off with the basic alphabet and then have developed skills to form sentences and conversations.

It has been a very beneficial experience that many people won't get offered, which shows how endless the opportunities are at NHGS.

Getting to converse with someone who uses Sign Language in their day to day life was very challenging but eye-opening and shows how important it is in the world.

We're very grateful for this opportunity and would like to thank Aftab for the fun, engaging and interactive lessons."

Amelia & Lauren

NHGS AND SENDIA

We are working towards an award for our Special Educational Needs and Disability provision: the SEND Inclusion Award (SENDIA). The process which we as a school have to go through will help us further develop our high quality SEND provision by:

- promoting awareness of SEND issues and inclusion for all staff, parents, students and governors
 - evaluating and improving classroom practice and intervention
 - focusing on student outcomes
-

DIVERSITY WEEK

By Mr Crossland, Vice Principal - Curriculum & Assessment

During November at NHGS we enjoyed our second annual diversity week. During this week we celebrate all the things that make us unique and different. As a truly inclusive school differences in race, religion, gender and sexuality are celebrated. This is a school where you can be yourself.

The week had a number of pop up events, these were designed to raise awareness and celebrate difference. During the course of the week we had taster sessions for disability sport (Boccia), pledges against bullying, and debating and poetry with a diversity theme. Treasure hunts and amnesty campaigns also featured.

For students, the highlight of the week was the NHGS pop up radio channel. Music with a theme of tolerance was played at every lesson transition. Songs from Culture Club, Madonna, Aretha Franklin and Bronski Beat all featured. The music may have stopped but the messages of tolerance, acceptance and, "It's okay to be you," live on!



GEOGRAPHY STUDY TOUR TO ICELAND OCTOBER 2018 - *an unforgettable tour of the south of the island*

Mrs Willis, Geography

On Friday 26th October 50 students and 5 staff travelled to Iceland to start an unforgettable tour of the south of the island. On arrival we were greeted by fantastic weather that gave us an hour or so in the sun to visit the geothermal mud pools and steam vents of the Reykjanes peninsula.



We then made our way to the famous Blue Lagoon to bathe in the milky blue waters and experience the silica mud masks under the moonlight. On our way to the hotel, we were lucky that William was keeping a watchful eye on the night sky as he noticed the Northern Lights out of the window of the bus. I had been to Iceland twice before and hadn't seen the Northern Lights so it was third time lucky for me!

The following morning we woke to an amazing sunrise and, after breakfast, we met our guide who was the fountain of knowledge about the geography and culture of Iceland during the trip. The first full day in Iceland took us initially to the Hellisheidi geothermal power station and then to Hveragerdi,

which is a town built above a hot-spring field. We visited the geothermal park where we were able to boil eggs in the geothermal stream and eat geothermal baked bread. Some of the students weren't particularly keen on eating the eggs!



In the shopping centre in Hveragerdi there is an earthquake simulator and exhibition dedicated to the earthquake which struck the south coast of Iceland in 2008, opening up a new hot spring in the town. The students took it in turns to experience the powerful earthquake in the simulator and in the main, seemed to enjoy it! Our journey along the south coast then took us to Seljalandsfoss waterfall, which is one of the best-known waterfalls in Iceland.

Unfortunately, due to the icy conditions we were unable to walk behind the waterfall but the ice added some drama to the water tumbling over the 60m drop.



After lunch came our second waterfall of the day and a challenging climb up the steep steps to the viewing platform at the top. The waterfall has been used in many films and music videos including Justin Bieber's 2015 hit 'I'll Show You' as well as Arla's advert for Skyr. Unfortunately we weren't treated to the sunny weather seen on the advert! Our second night was spent at the Hotel Dyrholaey close to Vik. Due to the wind and lashing rain we were unable to watch for the Northern Lights; on a clear night this rural hotel is perfect for

watching them!

After a very stormy night, we made our way down to the black sand beach at Reynishverfi, which is famous for its magnificent coastal features and basalt columns as well as being the filming location for Take That's 'Patience' and Bon Iver's 'Holocene' music videos as well as many others. The weather was particularly wild on the beach and we were able to experience the sheer power of the waves. We kept the group safely away from the shoreline as this beach is known for its freak waves due to the very long fetch, which can extend all the way to Antarctica!



In the afternoon, armed with ice axes and crampons, the group walked to the snout of the

Solheimajokull glacier, which is very close to the Katla volcano. Due to climate change the walk to the snout is much longer than it used to be as the glacier has retreated about a kilometre in the last decade and a noticeable 100m since our last visit in 2016. After receiving a full safety briefing by our guides we stepped onto the glacier and spent an hour or more learning about the features and erosive power of the ice. We were very lucky that the wind speeds were low enough to enable us to take part in this unforgettable activity but unfortunately the rain persisted during our time on the ice!



The last visit of the day was to the new LAVA centre at Hvolsvollur, which as the name suggests is dedicated to Iceland's range of volcanoes and particularly the famous eruption of Eyjafjallajokull in 2010. Mr Howarth was very impressed with the range of interactive exhibits on offer in this visitor centre and would have spent far longer there if he had been

allowed to! We spent our penultimate night at Hotel Ork, which has its own geothermal swimming pool and the students had a great time enjoying an outdoor swim before our evening meal.

Fortunately, the weather improved for our final day, which was a drive around the famous Golden Circle. It had snowed over night so although bitterly cold, the Icelandic scenery looked magnificent set against blue skies. Our first stop was Kerid, a dramatic volcanic crater lake, originally believed to have formed in an explosive eruption and this was followed by a visit to Gullfoss, one of Iceland's most photographed waterfalls. Some of our students said that the visits to the waterfalls were their favourite parts of the trip! Lunchtime was spent at Geysir where we observed the lively geyser, Stokkur, spout hot water 30m into the air.



Immediately after lunch we visited the Efstidalur dairy farm where we were able to sit in a cowshed watching the cows and calves in their natural environment as we

ate our ice-cream! The afternoon ended with a walk between the continents in the Thingvellir National Park. The last day was rounded off with a tour of Reykjavik, another swim and a fantastic meal in the famous, Icelandic Hamburger factory restaurant, which keeps a record of Iceland's total population on its wall!



This was the second trip to Iceland for NHGS and once again, both students and staff returned with some fantastic memories. Thank

you to Mr Howarth, Mr Jugroop, Mrs Quigley and Mrs Pegg for accompanying the trip. We are already looking at repeating the trip in October 2020 so look out for further information in due course.

I think Tom's post on our Twitter page sums up the visit very well:

"The trip ran like clockwork and there was never a dull moment. I had a great time and made some great memories with everyone!"

Ben in Year 12 added:

"Both educational and fun, for me Iceland was the perfect way to reinforce previously learnt areas of geography whilst expanding my knowledge of new things. The best part of the trip was the glacial walk

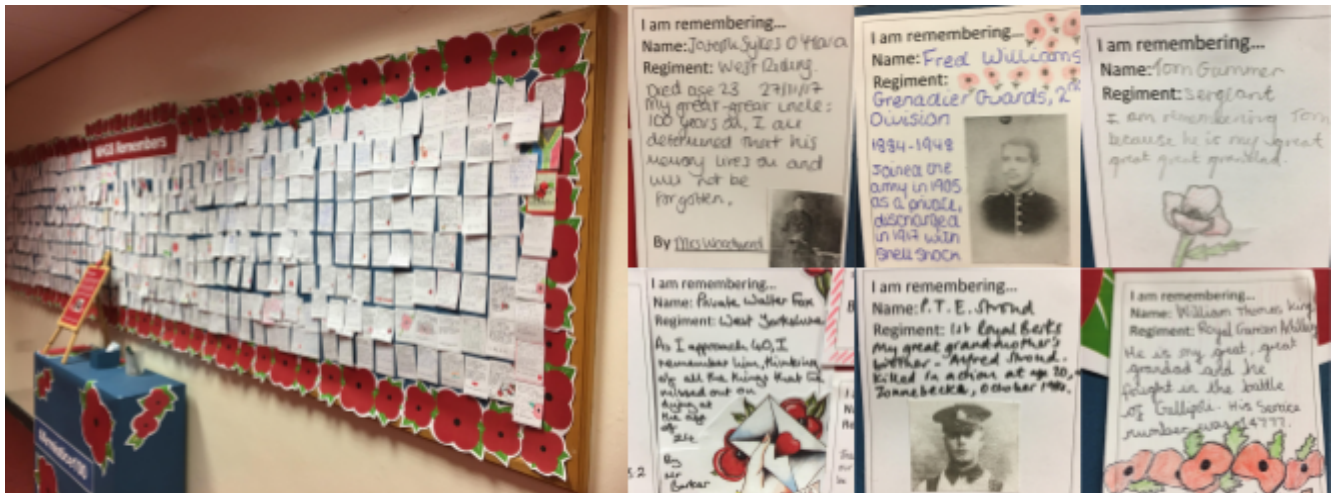
as it is truly a once in a lifetime chance to explore an area of Iceland that very few will ever see!"



#ARMISTICE100 NHGS REMEMBERS

As we trailed in the last newsletter, the History Department orchestrated a whole school Remembrance project to help students make a personal connection with a soldier of the First World War. Students, staff and parents were invited to choose a soldier from the First World War to remember on our NHGS Wall of Remembrance during the first week of November. A big thank you to Mrs Woodward for all of her hard work in co-ordinating the project.

Special thanks also goes to Year 8 students Hannah, Imogen, Leah, Lil, Mahroz and Zoe who supported the Remembrance project, delivering the launch assembly, selling poppies and writing the message of Remembrance that went on the wreath which was laid at the cenotaph.



LAST POST



At 11am on Friday 9th November, the whole school had a period of reflection. "For the Fallen" by Laurence Binyon was read by Mr Fisher over the tannoy system. The Last Post was then played by Rory Evans, followed by a minute's silence. Rory then played the Reveille. For the full audio of the NHGS period of reflection, please go to

<https://www.nhgs.co.uk/remembrance>.

REMEMBRANCE PARADE IN HALIFAX

"Two of our Year 8 students from the History Club, Lil and Zoe, deserve very special praise for attending the Remembrance Parade in Halifax on November 11th and laying a wreath on behalf of the school. They were fantastic on the day, showing maturity, respect and commitment, especially because it was absolutely pouring down for the whole time! They did themselves, the school and the memory of the fallen soldiers proud and it was a pleasure to work with all these students on this project." **Mrs Woodward**



MFL MATTERS

SPELLING BEE



Once again, Year 7 are taking part in the French Spelling Bee competition run by Routes into Languages. Individual class competitions will take place by the end of the Autumn Term with winners from each form

then competing in the school competition. NHGS students have always performed well enough to reach the regional competition and sometimes even the national competition.

Can we do so again this year?

TRANSLATION BEE



Students in Year 9 are taking part in the French and Spanish Translation Bee competitions. This competition builds on the requirements of the KS3 curriculum, with its emphasis on translation and grammatical

manipulation etc., helping students to practise and improve a range of skills vital to preparation for starting a GCSE course: vocabulary, pronunciation, memory, verb conjugation, tenses and sentence formation. Well done to all students who have completed stages in past, present and future tenses so far!

Extended Learning on Friday Lunchtimes

"Mr Hare's supplementary lessons are held for students of A Level French on a Friday lunchtime. In these sessions, he covers subjects that we, as a collective, are unsure about- this ranges from grammar to accent and pronunciation and is very beneficial for all involved. The things that we cover are often complex and initially hard to grasp, however by the end, we will all understand them and they will boost our grades at the end of the course." **The views of Year 12 students.**

LANGUAGE PERFECT NORTHERN CHAMPIONSHIPS



This competition took place from 6th – 13th November for all Modern Foreign Language students at NHGS. Congratulations to the following students who were awarded certificates for their impressive contributions:

GOLD AWARD (more than 3,000 points)

Ellie 8.6, Elohor 9.4, Michael 11.6

SILVER AWARD (more than 2,000 points)

Peter L6.5, George 10.5

BRONZE AWARD (more than 1,000 points)

Ehsan 8.3, Fergus 9.4

CREDIT AWARD (more than 500 points)

Dawson 7.5, Imogen 8.1, Lola 7.2,
Hannah 8.1, Zain 7.2, Katie 8.1
Rebecca 8.1, Freya 9.4, Beck 8.3, Scarlett L6.5

The MFL Department would like to thank all students who contributed – NHGS came 2nd for French in England out of 47 schools and 30th overall globally out of 151 schools. WELL DONE!

Rank	Country	School (80 out of 185 Schools)	Students	Score
1	ENG	Southend High School for Girls	526	64,719
2	ENG	The North Halifax Grammar School	924	36,375
3	ENG	St. Swithun's School	410	35,186
4	ENG	St Mary's College, Wallasey	794	30,465
5	ENG	Rushley Mead Academy	34	29,848
6	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	29,690
7	ENG	Clifton Lodge School	60	29,269
8	ENG	King James I Academy	109	29,029
9	ENG	Wisbech Grammar School	350	27,864
10	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
11	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
12	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
13	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
14	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
15	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
16	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
17	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
18	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
19	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
20	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
21	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
22	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
23	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
24	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
25	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
26	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
27	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
28	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
29	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	27,864
30	ENG	The North Halifax Grammar School	924	60,478
31	ENG	St John Plessington Catholic College	1,080	59,395
32	AUS	International School of WA	214	59,232
33	ARE	Victoria International School of Sharjah	151	59,224
34	ENG	Christleton International Studio	134	58,048
35	ARE	Amity International School	592	56,491
36	ENG	Wycliffe Preparatory School	29	54,969
37	ENG	Clifton Lodge School	60	51,224

MFL MATTERS - "FACES, PLACES"

Sixteen Y12 French students went to see the French film "Faces, Places" at the Square Chapel on 23rd November.



REVIEW BY ARON WEST, YEAR 12

'Faces, Places' ('Visages, Villages') is a French documentary-film following director Agnès Varda and street artist JR, as they journey through rural France. Travelling in JR's specially adapted van-turned-photobooth, the pair visit villages and towns, photograph the inhabitants, and leave behind giant murals exhibiting the locals' faces, through which an astonishing amount of emotion and power are conveyed.

At the start of the film, the pair visit a town which once thrived from the coal mining trade, but which is now

desolate and deserted. They meet Jeanine, the last inhabitant of a row of miners' houses that are soon to be demolished. Jeanine tells the stories of the previous inhabitants - the now deceased miners. Meanwhile, the houses are covered from bottom to top in photographs of former miner inhabitants, and Jeanine herself, honouring them on a scale normally reserved solely for famous figures.

Age, and a sense of loss through aging are also some of the emotions explored by the film. The age difference between the two artists is in many ways central to the story - Agnès is now aged 90,

compared to JR's 35 years. Agnès aims to meet as many new people as possible in her remaining lifetime, hence the trip, and her evident enjoyment in hearing others' stories.

As the couple journey, a fascinating insight into French culture is provided, especially that of rural life, creating a stark contrast to the more commonly-viewed aspects of French city culture. For viewers who like a non-action view of alternative lives and culture, this film is perfect. The varying places featured in the film are also enchanting for any language-learner interested in French culture - from a deserted mining town, to a chemicals factory, to a Second World War Gun Battery stranded on its side on a beach; the film imparted both a sense of nostalgia, but also an impressive feeling of great energy and life.

'Faces, Places' is a fascinating, thought-provoking and unique documentary-film, providing the perfect mixture of anecdotal stories, impressive artistry, and a sense of a French culture, with a difference.



MFL MATTERS - JUVENES TRANSLADORES AND MFL

On the 21st November 2018, five Sixth Form students took part in the Juvenes Translatores Competition at NHGS. The aim of this competition is to promote language learning and translation. A number of schools all over Europe took part in the competition on the same day.

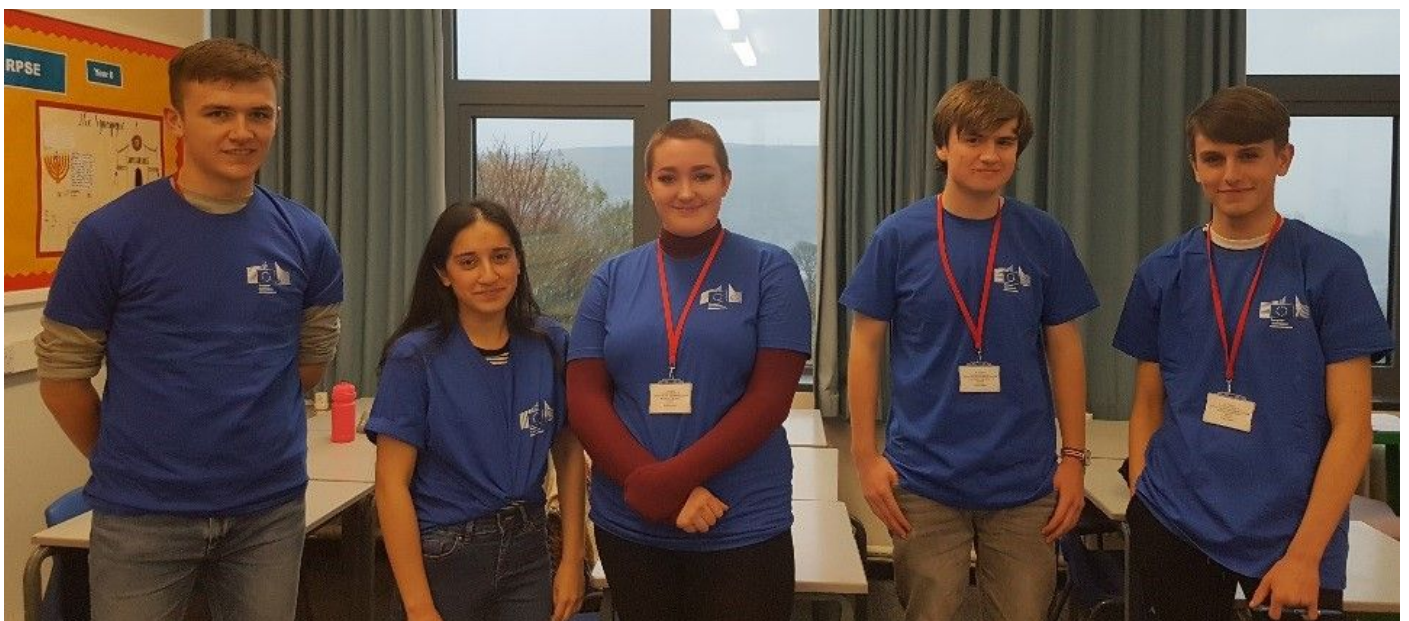
Initiatives like this represent a celebration of translation and languages in school, involving teachers and students from different classes. In the long run, learning a language helps us to bring us closer and to understand each other's cultures. Students competed in French and Spanish to English translation and those involved had a great day. These are some of their thoughts.

"The competition was a good way of helping me extend my French vocabulary and also allowed me to become more confident with translation by practising the skills needed."

Thomas (French)

"I really enjoyed taking part in the Juvenes Translatores competition as I feel it strengthened my Spanish translation skills. It was a fun experience and I would definitely recommend trying it out!" **Zaynab (Spanish)**

"Juvenes translatores was an amazing experience, not only for me to practise my translation skills, but also to challenge me with both my Spanish and English linguistic ability! I think that it is really fascinating that humans are able to interact with each other through so many variations of language, and the art of translation is a big part of communication around the world. It was an honour to represent the school and to push myself by trying something new. I really enjoyed the translation as it allowed me to explore an interesting topic whilst also picking up new vocabulary to help me through my A Level course." **Jenny (Spanish)**



DEBATING AT NHGS - OPENING DOORS FOR FORMER STUDENTS

Debating provides essential skills for life. The ability to speak confidently, argue persuasively, listen attentively and analyse issues are vital for many roles.

We have started our annual competition and topics such as the limits of freedom of artistic expression, whether parents or medical professionals should make crucial decisions about their children's health, and whether we as a nation should ban alcohol, have been hotly debated. **All students are welcome to join - and we can be found every Thursday in SF4.**

It has been wonderful this term to hear from many ex-debaters who have told us what they are up to now and how debating helped them with their lives and careers. Some of these students were always confident speakers, but others weren't - and all found debating incredibly useful to help build their ability to speak in public. Here are some of the things they said about debating at NHGS.

THE MEDIA WRITER

"Debate society was a brilliant first step towards being proactive about gaining life skills and new experiences. It gave me a head start in being able to formulate productive arguments, and be able to speak with confidence which I need to do every day at work. The discussions encouraged are also a great way to help round you as a thoughtful, considered individual- I think the world needs more of those right now." **Emma**

THE POLITICAL RESEARCHER *"I'm currently working in the private office of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. Debating at NHGS pushed and challenged me to research and develop arguments that I never thought I would have to make! Being able to construct a supportive case for something that you wholeheartedly disagree with is strangely satisfying and is a brilliantly useful skill when it comes to exams, essay writing or even everyday life!"* **Jacob**

THE POLICY OFFICER *"I currently work as a Policy Officer at Haringey Council. Outside of work I sit as a magistrate in the London Adult and Youth courts, where I preside over trials and sentence defendants. I'm really glad I joined the debating society at NHGS because it helped enormously with building my confidence and giving me lots of*

practice with public speaking. You can't underestimate the importance of these factors when you're looking for a job, speaking to colleagues at work or applying to be a magistrate!" **Luke**

THE CIVIL SERVANT *"Debating gave me the ability to structure a persuasive argument but most importantly the confidence to speak in front of a group. This has been very helpful in my new job on the Civil Service Fast Stream, helping me to present to senior managers, and defend my point of view."* **Hannah**

THE SOCIAL WORKER *"I'm now working as an advocate for Solace Women's Aid in London. I have to advocate a lot to the councils across London so women can access their rights to safe housing, which are often denied by the councils and housing associations. So I guess you could say I use the skills learnt in debating every day as I have to professionally argue my case with Housing teams, and other agencies including Social Services, lawyers, CAB and other voluntary sector agencies. Debating has certainly had an impact as I have grown in confidence both in my personal and professional life."* **Rhiannon**

THE ENVIRONMENTALIST *"I am currently doing a paid internship at Greenpeace UK. Debating at NHGS brought my voice out. Taking part in the weekly practice debate sessions and the ESU speaking competition strengthened my self-confidence and made me feel persuasive and empowered. The skills of persuasion and presentation I learnt from debating developed my confidence in self-expression which subsequently enabled me to gain many professional and learning opportunities"* **Joselene**

THE ENGINEER *"As an already confident public speaker, I didn't think I'd get much out of debating, but I enjoyed having to think about the side of an argument that I didn't particularly agree with and still deliver a persuasive argument to an audience. I enjoyed thinking about new subject areas, and engaging with different perspectives on contentious subjects."* **Ben**

THE LINGUIST *"Debating improves your ability to think logically and rationally. You learn how to organise your thoughts and communicate them effectively. This is a great skill to have at university, you may have the best ideas, but they're useless if you can't use language effectively to write or talk about them."* **Jake**

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP



The Creative Writing Group have had a great term. We've reworked myths into modern versions. Maisy gave us all a workshop in performance poetry and some powerful performance poems were delivered after Diversity Week. The term culminated in working on picture books for children on a festive theme where stories about elf exploitation, Rudolph's desire to see the northern lights and a girl longing for snow were shared amongst others. Well done to everyone for all their creativity and imagination this term.

SENIOR UKMT INDIVIDUAL RESULTS AND SENIOR TEAM MATHEMATICS COMPETITION

The UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT) is a registered charity whose aim is to advance the education of children and young people in mathematics. The UKMT organises national mathematics competitions and other mathematical enrichment activities for 11-18 year old UK school pupils.

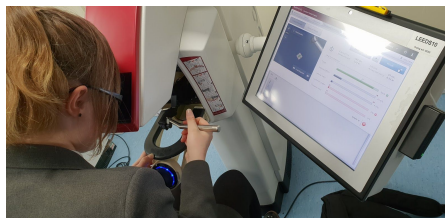
Jessica	Best in school Silver certificate
Oliver	Beaumont Silver certificate
Henry	Mcfadzean Silver certificate
Daniel	Hudson Bronze certificate

Also many thanks to Edward, Isaac, Lavinia and Alex for volunteering to represent the school in the Senior Team Mathematics Competition held in the Great Hall at the University of Leeds. They were a credit to the school.



MEDICINE & HEALTH TASTER DAY AT UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS - YEAR 9

During the last week of term, Y9 students attended a Medicine & Health Taster Day at University of Leeds. They covered "what makes a good Healthcare Professional", Basic Life Support, Radiography, Sonography and then Dentistry. It was a fabulous day, the students were engaged & interested throughout.



MUSIC CONCERT - 'STEP INTO CHRISTMAS'



Music has always been important at NHGS, with a range of ensembles to suit every musician within the school. This was recently showcased in the 'Step into Christmas' concert, which featured almost every ensemble in the school.



"I was once again astounded at the level of ability and commitment which was illustrated in every performance throughout the evening. It was a really enjoyable evening for audience and performers alike. Well done to everyone!"
Mrs Pegg



The concert featured a range of ensembles, from the Rock Choir, who performed a fabulous rendition of 'This is Me' from the Greatest Showman, to the Big Band, who gave us their version of 'April in Paris'. A hint of Christmas came from the Brass Group and Choral Group, who performed songs such as 'Ding Dong Merrily on High' and 'Christmas Lullaby'. Some other ensembles included the String Group, Concert Band and Woodwind Ensemble.

Concerts at NHGS are an event not to be missed and this one was no exception. We as musicians hope to continue putting on performances for the rest of our time here at NHGS, in order to improve our talent, entertain others and support our school.

A special thank you goes to the Music Department, Mr Crawford, NHGS Parents' Association and parents for helping to make the music concert possible.



CAROL SERVICE - "FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS"

By Mr Fisher, Principal and Mrs Pegg, Head of Music

The school has been holding its Carol Services annually at Halifax Minster since the school opened. Mr Langhorn, a former student as well as one of our longest-serving members of staff, estimates he must have attended more than fifty times now, counting both afternoon and evening services. And along with many others who are knowledgeable about such matters, he rated this year's as one of the best ever; and very possibly THE best ever.

Taking almost the entire school to The Minster for the afternoon is an exercise in logistics and many other disciplines too. The behaviour in the church was an absolute credit to all of the students and staff; especially considering that the first students took their pews some forty-five minutes before the last ones to be seated. The way the students respected the space and listened intently to the beautiful playing of the Brass and Guitar ensembles was special in itself.

Both services opened with a stunning solo from Nina, singing the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City". Both congregations took their cue from Nina (and the choir of eighty-five students and staff) and sang out confidently and clearly, to old favourites (O little town of Bethlehem, Away in a manger, O come all ye faithful, Hark! the Herald) and the more modern Calypso Carol alike. The congregations were also treated to performances by the Rock Choir, Choral Group and Vocal Quartet, as well as to a series of readings, mixing traditional Bible readings with modern meditations.



The NHGS Choral group performed three pieces; an arrangement of Ding Dong Merrily on High, Stille Nacht – featuring soloist Gala from Year 11 – and John Rutter's Christmas Lullaby. All pieces were performed with wonderful musicality and the harmonies were really well balanced.

The Rock choir began their performances with an uplifting rendition of "Good Christians All Rejoice". The highlight of the evening was 'Gaudete'; a very challenging new arrangement with live percussion. The energy created by the performance was incredible and the piece really worked so well with the acoustics of the Minster. Congratulations to the Percussion Ensemble for providing the rhythmic backing and to Scarlett and Eve (Y11) for their solos at the beginning of the piece. A stunning crowd-pleaser that might well become a staple of future services.

The evening congregation were rewarded for their attendance by the Parents' Association's mulled wine and mince pies which went down a treat with those who stayed behind to meet old friends and enjoy the wonderfully convivial and seasonal atmosphere created by the music, the readings and the glorious setting of The Minster itself – resplendent with its Christmas Tree Festival in full swing.

A huge thank you to all students and staff who were involved in the performances. They all worked so hard since the beginning of November in putting it together and the hard work really paid off. The quality that they managed to produce on forty minutes per week of rehearsal time was staggering. Thank you to everyone who has passed on their congratulations. The number of people who have taken the time to express how much they enjoyed the performances – both staff and members of the congregation – has been overwhelming. "Best one Yet" seems to be a common theme! If you sadly missed out on coming this year, don't make the same mistake next time...

NHGS SPORTING NEWS

CALDERDALE CROSS COUNTRY

There was fantastic representation from NHGS at the Calderdale Cross Country Championships earlier this week. Students who finished in the top 12, qualifying to represent Calderdale at the West Yorkshire Schools Cross-Country Championships in February: Y7 Girls: Olivia (1st & Q), Jessica (Q), Lydia. Y7 Boys: Ethan, Will, Armaan, Niall, Jude, Alex, Oscar, Fergus, Callum, Harry, Thomas. Y8 Girls: Chloe (Q). Y8 Boys: Harry (Q), Patrick, James. Y9 Girls: Emilia (Q). Y9 Boys: Alex (Q), JD. 6th Form: Harry (3rd & Q). Q=qualification. **Well done to everyone involved.**



GIRLS' RUGBY

Year 7 and 8 girls in the White Rose Rugby Competition. The cold and rain doesn't put these girls off, great team effort with plenty of tries scored!



Thanks again to 6th Former Eleanor for the fab coaching!

GIRLS' FOOTBALL

Fixtures started for Year 7 and 8 football against local schools, with more to come after Christmas. Great numbers at training and effort all round. Well done girls!



HOCKEY

U13 Hockey

Fantastic turn out to hockey training both boys and girls from all Year 8s this half-term. A large number of different students have represented NHGS in hockey fixtures and performed to their best of their abilities and experience at all times, regardless of the result.



U15 hockey

Winners of the outdoor Calderdale schools' hockey tournament.



U19 Indoor Hockey

Winners of the indoor Calderdale schools hockey tournament, hosted at NHGS.



Well done to the U16 team also who played up an age and came 4th.



NETBALL NEWS

Calderdale Schools Netball

Congratulations to Eleanor (Y10) and Mollie (Y9) who were successfully selected for the Calderdale U15 netball squad after their second trial.

NHGS Netball

Year 12/13

v Ryburn, won 17-2, player of the match Carmelina (Y13)

v Crossley Heath, lost 23-9, player of the match Matilda (Y13)

Year 11

v Ryburn, won 12-5, player of the match Olivia

v Crossley Heath, won 15-14 player of the match Hannah

Year 10

v Trinity Academy won 12-1, player of the match Eleanor

v Hipperholme Grammar, won 20-3, players of the match Kacey and Eleanor

Year 9

v Ryburn, won 20-10, player of the match Eve.

v Trinity A, won 10-9, player of the match Victory

v Trinity B, won 8-4, player of the match Isabel

v Crossley Heath, lost 14-9, player of the match Lexie

Year 8

v Trinity Academy, lost 13-4, player of the match India

Year 7

v Ryburn, won 15-2, players of the match Olivia & Phoebe F

v Trinity Academy, won 8-4, player of the match Pheobe J



SWIMMING

Calderdale Schools Swimming Championships 2018

Congratulations to Alec (Y8), Jacob (Y10), Ryan (Y10), Jessica (Y7), Bella (Y8), Chloe (Y8), Annabel (Y8), Carmel (Y8), Daisy (Y8), Harriet (Y10), Eleanor (11) and Olivia (Y11) who all put in strong performances in the pool. Especially Chloe who won bronze in the junior girls 100m freestyle and Oliva who won silver in the senior girls 100m freestyle. Olivia, Eleanor and Harriet also won bronze in the girls open 50m freestyle relay race. Well done to all involved.



BOYS' FOOTBALL

date	opponents	status	1st XI		Y11		Y10		Y9		Y8		Y7	
			venue	result	venue	result	venue	result	venue	result	venue	result	venue	result
19.9	Rastrick	CSSA league											H	L 5-2
20.9	Rastrick	CSSA league					A	D 1-1			A	L 5-2		
25.9	Abbey Grange	ESFA									H	L 4-2		
26.9	Batley GS	ESFA							A	W 10-0				
3.10	Ermysteads	ESFA	H	L 5-4										
3.10	Lightcliffe	CSSA league							A	L 3-2	A	W 3-2		
4.10	Lightcliffe	CSSA league					A	W 2-1					A	W 6-4
9.10	Brighouse	CSSA league					A	L 4-2			A	w3-1		
10.10	Ermysteads	ESFA			H	W 5-1								
10.10	Brighouse	CSSA league							A	w 4-1			A	D3-3
15.10	Rastrick	ESFA							A	w 7-2				
15.10	Rastrick	ESFA					H	W 2-1						
16.10	Ryburn	CSSA league					H	D 3-3					H	L 6-0
17.10	Ryburn	CSSA league							H	W 7-2	H	L 5-2		
23.10	Brooksbank	CSSA league							A	W 3-1			A	D 3-3
24.10	Brooksbank	CSSA league					A	D 2-2			A	L 10-0		
6.11.	Todmorden	CSSA cup							A	W 4-1				
6.11.	Batley GS	WY Cup									H	W 4-1		
7.11	Calder	CSSA league							H	W1-0			H	W5-2
8.11	Calder	CSSA league					H	W 2-1			H	L4-2		
12.11	St Mary's	ESFA					A	L 6-0						
13.11	Trinity	CSSA league							H	W 2-0			H	W 6-0
14.11.18	Bacup & Rawtenstall	ESFA							H	W 5-0				
14.11	Brooksbank	ESFA			A	L 2-1								
15.11	Trinity	CSSA league					H	W 2-1			H	W 1-0		
19.11.18	Cross Heath	CSSA league							H	L 1-0				
27.11.18	Rossett	ESFA							A	L7-1				
28.11	Shelley	WY Cup	A	W 10-1										
TBA	Rastrick	CSSA league							A	TBA				

YORKSHIRE SCHOOLS RUGBY LEAGUE

Year 9

Longcroft Academy (Hull) lost 18-10

Minsthorpe CC (Wakefield) won 22-14

Next game is against Carleton Academy (Wakefield) in the plate competition January 2019.

BASKETBALL

U16 - Beat Brooksbank 18-12 Trinity Academy 16-8.

U13 - Beat Brooksbank 16-12

U12 - Lost to Brooksbank 24-8.

NHGS - COMING SOON NEXT HALF TERM

Performing Arts

First Bow: First Bow Performances will take place on 23rd and 24th January 2019.

Performing Arts Showcase and Matilda: 20th and 21st March 2019.

If any parents would like to know more about performing arts opportunities at NHGS please contact Mr Marsh by email: g.marsh@nhgs.co.uk

Key Dates

Monday January 7th	School Opens Spring Term
Monday January 21st	Monitoring 2 Home (email)
Wednesday January 23rd	First Bow 6.00-9.00pm
Thursday January 24th	First Bow 6.00-9.00pm
Thursday January 31st	Parents' Evening (Y11) 5.00-8.00pm
Thursday February 7th	Parents' Evening (Y12) 5.00-8.00pm
Thursday February 14th	Parents' Evening (Y7) 5.00-8.00pm
Friday February 15th	School Closes Half Term Holiday 3.00pm
Monday February 25th	School Opens
Thursday March 7th	UCAS Evening 6.30-8.30pm
Wednesday March 20th	Production: This is Me / Matilda 7.00-9.00pm
Thursday March 21st	Production: This is Me / Matilda 7.00-9.00pm
Monday March 25th	Apprenticeship Evening
Thursday March 14th	Parents' Evening (Y10) 5.00-8.00pm
Tuesday April 2nd	Monitoring 3 Home (Years 9, 11-13) (email)
Thursday April 4th	Parents' Evening (Y9) 5.00-8.00pm
Wednesday April 10th	Music Competition Finals
Thursday April 11th	Parents' Evening (Y8) 5.00-8.00pm
Friday April 12th	School Closes End of Spring Term 12.00noon

Polite Notice - Road Safety & Parking

In the interest of pedestrian safety and to maintain good relations with the neighbouring residents, we politely request that parents and older students are considerate when approaching and parking near the school. Please be mindful of where students are crossing the road and also do not park on the islands near the entrance to the staff car park. Thank you.

NHGS PARENTS' ASSOCIATION NEWS CHRISTMAS 2018

An Introduction to the new Chair of NHGSPA - Sue Smith.



Hello, my name is Sue and I'm the new Chair of NHGSPA, following Hermione Berry's stand down at the AGM in November. Hermione and her committee have been very accomplished in their recent fundraising and hospitality events and I intend to continue as best I can, remembering faces and repeatedly asking names, seems to be my lot over the last few weeks!

"A proper daft time to take the reins" was my regular thought during the week before the Christmas Fayre, but Hermione, Liz Fiddaman and Janet Griffiths were great support, with the loads of knowledge needed to pull together another successful do on Saturday December 1st. With a mountain of chocolate, a great team of regulars and 'on the day helpers' pitching up to lend a big hand, we raised in the region of £3,000.

My two highlights; our lovely Choir gave the Fayre an especially Festive entrance and in the Lower Foyer, the student entries for the first NHGS 'Cake-Off'. These were all impressive, well done to all those students involved.

A big thank you to all the families that donated chocolate and raffle prizes, further thanks to the students who gave up their time to leaflet drop the local areas, ensuring that our Christmas Fayre feels like a community event and further appreciation to local businesses for their generosity. The overwhelming support from NHGS Premises Team and the Catering Dept. was remarkable and very much appreciated.

I was thrilled to read the final hamper raffle figure, oh my! Over £6,000. Well done, especially Janet Griffiths and Ruth Lack for all your the hard work, and of course the students for the creative hampers and their ticket selling.

As we head towards the end of 2018 I'm looking forward to Carols at Halifax Minster on Tues. 18th December and welcoming my eldest daughter home from Uni.

Our fledgling committee could really do with new faces. If you can, please attend the PA meetings at school, just a couple of hours a month, or let us know if you're available to help at events. I'm always on the listen out for new fundraising ideas and would welcome any input to help reach this academic year's fundraising target of £10,000 for the tech block. Extra hands are welcome as we have lots to plan with a couple of new events in the pipeline for 2019. **Merry Christmas Everyone and a happy and Healthy 2019. Sue.**

Special Thanks to students for their personal entries into the NHGS Bake Off competition, and donations to the Christmas Fayre: Seamy, Simran, Owen, Alisha and Caleb from Year 10. Harry from Year 9. Emily, Rebecca, Olivia, Eve, Matilda, Jeska, Hannah and Carmel from Year 8. Dee Dee, Benjamin, Lewis, Lily, Renae, Isla, Rebecca, Lucy, Nuh and Isabel from Year 7.



Can you help by supporting the NHGS PA events and activities?

PERFORMING ARTS, MUSIC & PARENTS' CONSULTATION EVENINGS

At last year's school events your generous donations and purchases of drinks and snacks **helped us to raise over £1,500**. Please continue to support the PA refreshments stalls at the various school events – every biscuit and cuppa helps!

Key dates to have some change at the ready:

- Wednesday January 22nd - First Bow
- Thursday January 23rd – First Bow
- Thursday January 31st Parents' Evening (Y11)
- Thursday February 7th Parents' Evening (Y12)
- Thursday February 14th Parents' Evening (Y7)
- Wednesday March 20th Production: This is Me/ Matilda
- Thursday March 21st Production: This is Me/ Matilda
- Thursday March 14th Parents' Evening (Y10)
- Thursday April 4th Parents' Evening (Y9)
- Thursday April 11th Parents' Evening (Y8)

PA MEETINGS

Come and join us at one of our meetings usually on the **first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in school**. All welcome, just let us know beforehand so we can look out for you.

OVERSEAS COINS & NOTES



We are still collecting and our bucket in school reception is waiting for any notes or coins such as pesetas, rupees or euros you have left over from your holidays. **All donations including old £1 coins gratefully received.**

EASYFUNDRAISING



Did you know that you can raise money for NHGSPA while you shop. It is easy to do and at no extra cost to you! Please support North Halifax Grammar School Parents' Association through Easyfundraising:

www.easyfundraising.org.uk

KEEP IN TOUCH

Please follow us on Facebook. It's a way to connect with other parents as well as keeping in touch with our activities. Our Facebook group is also a great way to find answers to those school related questions as other parents may just know the answer!



Facebook: Search for North Halifax Grammar School Parents' Association
(<http://www.facebook.com/groups/1414873465412640>)



Twitter @NHGSPA



Website: nhgspa.org.uk

