



## NHGS NEWS 2018/19: ISSUE FOUR

# EASTER

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Welcome to another bumper issue of our NHGS newsletter. As ever, it is humbling to see what so many staff and students are doing in addition to their day jobs, ensuring that first-class learning is taking place. We could, as some schools do, focus all of this energy onto exam preparation to give our Progress 8 score a boost, but it has always been central to our vision of education that it is about more than just squeezing the best grades possible out of everyone. What life skills and experiences might students miss out on if we neglected to put on shows, run competitions, enter sporting tournaments and offer the multitude of other opportunities outlined in these pages? A school is a microcosm of wider opportunities for everyone to be included, to find their niches, and to grow their self-esteem through making a positive contribution. As Years 11 and 13 gear up for their final revision and the onset of exam season, we hope they will do their very best, but also remember that exams are only one element of life and are not the only route to health, wealth and well-being.

**A very happy Easter to everyone.**

**Mr Fisher**



## WELL-BEING PART 4: Watching out for signs of low mood in your child, and what to do about it



Mrs Booth - Well-being & Engagement Officer  
Mrs Lamb - Welfare Officer

Are you finding it difficult to tell if your child is suffering from low mood? Perhaps they are just a typical hormonal teenager?



The key is to note any **CHANGES** in behaviour, particularly a child who retreats from social situations or isn't enjoying the things they used to; a child whose normally good sleep has deteriorated and lacks their usual energy; or a child who starts making choices which are not healthy for them.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** This year we have come across students using Roaccetane medication for acne and experiencing the side-effects of anxiety and low mood warned of by their GP. If your child is prescribed this, please have a conversation with your GP and keep an eye on your son or daughter's mood. Please also let Mrs Lamb know, so that we can monitor things in school too.

For more information, <https://www.nhs.uk/medicines/isotretinoin-capsules/>

If you are worried about your child, the best starting point is to have a chat with them about things. **Here are some tips:**



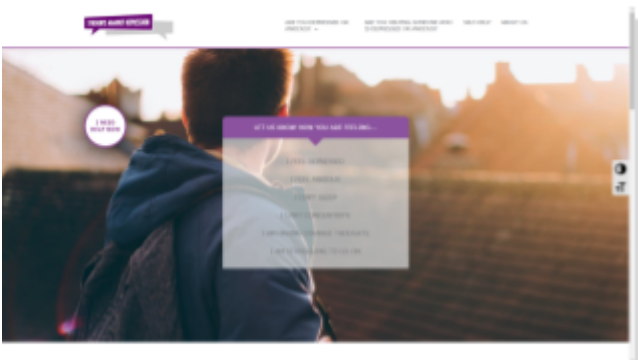
- Try to 'park' your own anxieties and allow plenty of time to talk; stay calm and supportive, as this might be hard to talk about
- Give the facts about what's concerning you and try not to make any judgements
- Ask open questions and give them time if they struggle to answer
- Tell them you are here to listen at any time; be available
- If they don't want to talk, ask them if there's someone else they would be willing to talk to
- If what they say is concerning and you are going to contact the GP or school for help with it, keep them in the loop at every stage

Low mood can affect anyone, so try not to point out that they have no reason to be low because they have a great life. This is the thought that plagues most people who suffer from low mood; they can't see a reason or 'trigger' for it. And there often isn't one. However, **here are some strategies which may help:**

- Most importantly, getting moving. Walking, running, sport or activity of any kind, particularly outside in daylight and fresh air, is the best medicine. Of course, this may be the last thing they want to do, so start with small steps!
- Doing something expressive and/or creative so that they are absorbed: such as drawing, colouring books, baking, crafts of all kinds, playing an instrument, puzzles and games.
- Trying to have a healthy approach to eating, drinking and sleeping.
- Choosing to watch something funny which is a distraction rather than scrolling through social media making themselves anxious.
- Doing something helpful for others to give themselves a purpose which takes them outside of their own thoughts: eg. walk the dog or spend time with a pet, visit an older person and make them a cup of tea, or volunteer at a charity shop.
- Connecting with others: yes, this is sometimes through social media, but it's even healthier still to speak to someone in person.
- Thinking of one thing they did well enough each day. It can be something small like making someone laugh or completing French homework. Try to praise these small achievements.
- If their mood drops in the darker months, consider a light box to boost their light exposure and mood. Seasonal Affective Disorder affects lots of people; more information can be found on [www.sad.co.uk](http://www.sad.co.uk)
- If you are supporting someone with low mood, make sure you look after yourself too and find someone to talk to.



Further useful information can be found here:

Young Minds	Charlie Walker Memorial Trust
 <p><i>If you think your child or family might need some extra support with their mental health, here is our advice and information about counselling and where you can get help.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents">www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents</a></p>	 <p><i>Resources for parents and young people on a range of well-being issues.</i></p> <p><a href="https://www.cwmt.org.uk/">https://www.cwmt.org.uk/</a></p>
Student Minds	Students Against Depression
 <p><i>Student Minds works with students, service users, professionals and academics to develop new and innovative ways to improve the mental health of students.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.studentminds.org.uk">www.studentminds.org.uk</a></p>	 <p><i>Students Against Depression is a website offering advice, information, guidance and resources to those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking.</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.studentsagainstdepression.org">www.studentsagainstdepression.org</a></p>

Although it's worrying to think that 1 in 10 of young people nationally will suffer from poor mental health at some time, providing support early on is the key to better management of any symptoms. Here at NHGS we provide supporting staff who can help with any of these issues at any age, so please feel free to contact Mrs Lamb or Mrs Booth to discuss any worries.

**n.lamb@nhgs.co.uk, c.booth@nhgs.co.uk**



### The Challenge Agenda By Charlotte Tomlin, Vice Principal in Learning Quality

Since January the school has been focusing on the level of challenge in the classroom. As a grammar school we know that all our students are capable of the highest possible grades and it is our job to stretch and challenge appropriately in the classroom everyday to make this a reality.

Through academic research and in-house lesson observation we have created the **NHGS Challenge Agenda** in collaboration with the NHGS ALT group (Assessment, Learning and Teaching group). The Challenge Agenda is a suite of teaching techniques and approaches which will best support high achievement. The vision for challenge at NHGS is set out below:

*Challenge is rooted in the highest aspirations for all students every day in every classroom. Teachers should be teaching to the top. All students should be stretched to reach their highest possible potential; supported by their highest possible effort and perseverance. Teachers work alongside all students with an "I believe in you" mentality; together we achieve more (collaboration is crucial).*

*Students are set tasks and activities which genuinely foster "intellectual struggle". The challenge within the curriculum is high yet achievable with hard work. Teachers guide*

*students to deeper knowledge, understanding and skills with individualised feedback and support. Students use keywords and subject specific vocabulary frequently and with confidence.*

*Students are able to analyse their performances and make recommendations for future improvement - metacognitive practices such as peer and self assessment are a regular part of every student's classroom experience. Challenge will be demonstrated over time in books. Students' work will show increasing levels of difficulty.*

As a school we are currently focused on piloting the metacognitive practice of teacher modelling to help support Y10 and 11 students with their upcoming examinations. Teacher modelling involves the teacher verbalising and "live writing" their response to an examination question. This technique helps students to "get inside the teacher's head" and understand the thought processes used to formulate a high level answer. Teachers exemplify planning, monitoring and evaluating their answers as they write. Students can then practise and replicate these techniques in their own examinations.

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT - CHARLOTTE TOMLIN

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I have been in a Senior Leadership role for the last 6 years here at NHGS as an Assistant Headteacher and now as Vice Principal in charge of Learning Quality. I started at NHGS in 2000 as a main scale PE teacher and have enjoyed roles as Head of Girls' PE, Head of PE and Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator. I have been very fortunate to gain various promotions within the school which have continued to challenge and enthuse me.

I am deeply passionate about the school and our vision to develop the whole person through “*Living to Learn-Learning to Live*”. It is a privilege to support our hard-working teaching team in creating the most stimulating and motivating learning environments possible. I really enjoy my job and relish interactions with our curious and intelligent students; they make me smile every day. For me, NHGS really is family.

**Q. How can parents and carers best support their son or daughter to achieve their potential?**

*There are a number of things that parents and carers can do to support their child:*

- 1. Encourage grit and determination in the face of adversity and temporary failure. “I can’t do it” needs to be turned into “I can’t do it yet”.*
- 2. Encourage, motivate and take an interest in your child’s school work every day.*
- 3. Help your child understand that learning is a “journey” and it takes a dedicated approach every lesson, every day.*
- 4. Support learning in the classroom by quizzing your son or daughter on their most recent work but also on learning completed a few months ago - this is called “spiralling back”. This helps with storage of knowledge in the long term memory.*
- 5. Sign the planner weekly and use it as a platform for raising any concerns with staff.*
- 6. Share family experiences of learning e.e cultural events, art galleries, going to the theatre, museums. Model that learning is valuable to everybody, at all stages of life.*
- 7. Link learning to the bigger picture; to future careers, apprenticeships and university.*

## YEAR 7 - TENNER CHALLENGE



At NHGS we promote enterprise throughout school life, the programme in Year 7 includes the Tenner

Challenge, a National Programme which is run by Young Enterprise. We have invited all Year 7 students to be involved.

The challenge involves students being granted £10 on 4<sup>th</sup> March to use to make a profit. Teams' activities are covered by Tenner insurance and as such there are various restrictions on what they are allowed to do and sell.

At the end of the challenge on 29<sup>th</sup> March, teams returned the £10 grant plus a further £1 per £10 pledged (Legacy Donation) to sustain the Tenner Challenge Bank. We have asked that if teams make a profit they donate half of any profits made to the NHGS Parents' Association which this year has **totalled more than £480!!** They are able to keep the other half to distribute as they wish or donate to a charity of their choice. Students may decide to spend the money on resources for their form to use in tutorial time or to share the money equally between their team to spend as they wish.

There have been 2 National Competitions during the challenge to keep participants motivated including designing their logo and recording a 60 second sales pitch.

Students record their progress throughout the challenge using a journal and the 5 best entrants

have been chosen to enter the National Tenner Challenge Competition. For each age group there are 5 different awards: Most Profitable Business Idea, Best Team, Best Community Impact, Best in Sustainability, Most Inspiring Individual in a team or working on their own. Entries will be divided into the different age brackets and then short listed by an internal Young Enterprise panel. The final entries will be given to an external panel of judges to decide on the winners for each category.

The NHGS Parents' Association has kindly donated prizes of chocolates for NHGS Tenner Challenge prize winners. We have awarded prizes for:

- Best Logo – The Tenner Sisters,
- Best Sales Pitch – The B Team
- Best Marketing – Scrabble Crafters
- Most Profitable Team – Scrabble Crafters who donated £90.95 to the Parents' Association and Form 7.2 who made the most profit with a £118.15 donation to the PA.

In 2018, 80% of students surveyed nationally agreed that Tenner helped them understand the world of work; 60% of students would consider starting their own business, the average profit was £111 and over 60% of students gave their profits to charity. Further information can be found at <http://www.tenner.org.uk/about-tenner>

**Thank you to all students, parents and teachers who have supported the Challenge and made it another fantastic experience for the students.**





## SKI TRIP - NHGS HITS THE SLOPES OF KUHTAI AUSTRIA 2019

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Every two years the school runs a ski trip involving the upper school. This year the Sixth Form students at NHGS were lucky enough to be given the opportunity to ski in Kuhtai, Austria over the February half term holiday. The fans of the Channel 4 show 'The Jump' may recognise it as the show is filmed in the resort. The mountains were stunning in the beautiful late winter sunshine and we all really appreciated the awesome views and crisp clean air at 2020m above sea level.

At the start of the week we had a small number of advanced level skiers who kept their own individual instructor for the week. Everyone else on the trip was a beginner skier, so staff were keen for our students to rise to the challenge of learning to ski within the week. I'm glad to say that all of the students were confidently parallel skiing by the end of the week, which is testament to their tenacity and perseverance.

We were blessed with the weather, skiing in t-shirts on the beginners slope for the first few days and receiving some fresh powder snow to finish off on the final day. We managed several excursions throughout the week, shopping, bowling and ice skating in the historic regional centre of Innsbruck.

Thanks to the staff that supported the students on the trip, Mr Jugroop and Miss Brooke, who were instrumental in coaching and supporting all the students to give of their best all week. It was gratifying to get such wonderful feedback from the ski instructors, hotel staff, coach drivers and the tour company about the positive attitude and behaviour of our students throughout the week. Well done to everyone involved in making this year's ski trip such a success. **Mr N.I.Howarth, Trip Organiser / Head of Geography**





## NHGS TRIP TO PARLIAMENT

Year 12 and 13 Politics students went to Parliament on 1st March. They took part in debates and watched a lively session in the House of Lords.



## FMSP MATHS FEAST

Two teams from NHGS Year 10 competed in the FMSP Maths Feast on 6th March. Both teams held their own in a strong field, but one team really shone. Not only did they win a prize for achieving the highest mark in three out of the four rounds (two of which they got full marks in!!), they also won overall! Well done to Solomon, Sam L, Sam P and Connor for another excellent result. No pressure Year 9, but that is the second time NHGS have won....

I really liked the calculations and the cookies! It was great (Jack)

I really liked that I learnt about Prim's algorithm (Danish)

The problems were really challenging, but with teamwork and cooperation, we managed to work them out! (Samuel L)

I really enjoyed working as a team to solve the problems (Natasha)

I enjoyed learning new things (Connor)

I enjoyed incorporating maths into real world applications (Solomon)

The variety of maths activities really got me thinking (James)

It was great because you learnt new skills and applied them as a team (Samuel P)

Helping the Year 10 students at the MathsFeast illustrated the great teamwork shown by our students. They were enthusiastic and oozed our school values. It was no surprise that they came in first place, well done!! (Mo, Year 12 Helper)

## PHYSICS OLYMPIADS

Recently some Year 11 and 12 students have taken part in the physics Olympiads, set by the Institute of Physics. These papers are designed to be extremely challenging. Only (the best) 6000 students nationally take part in each of these papers. Pupils who are in the top half of these get a Bronze.

### Year 11

Bronze second class: Finn, Rebecca, William, Amy, James and Vyom

Bronze first class: Jac and Travis

### Year 12

Bronze second class: Daniel

## MATHS CHALLENGE AT BRADFORD GRAMMAR

Ajay, Alec, Ebonie and Laki form Year 8 travelled to Bradford Grammar School for a maths challenge.



## ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT TRUST & YEAR 8 STEM EVENT

STEM: On Friday 29th March all Year 8 students participated in an event hosted by [The EDT UK](#) and [Tata Consultancy Services](#). EDT's First Edition programme provides quality Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STE(A)M) curriculum enrichment taster experiences. These hands-on activity days are designed to excite and enlighten young people on how STE(A)M is fun, interesting, and results in a rewarding career. The NHGS session was supported by experts from industry and had a digital slant with creative activities including a coding challenge and a STEM Den where students will have to pitch ideas to a panel.



## YEAR 8 REWARDS DAY

Much fun was had on the Year 8 rewards day with Operation Laser Tag



## LEEDS FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE: MATHS DAY

On 3rd April 20 NHGS A-level mathematics students went to the University of Leeds with Mrs Ablewhite for the [Leeds Festival of Science](#), Key Stage 5 Maths Day. As well as a campus tour, the students looked at "Hidden symmetries of nature" and enjoyed a W. P. Milne Lecture "To infinity and beyond". They explored the mysteries and misconceptions of infinity, from ancient puzzles to some of the very latest mathematical research, taking them to infinity... and beyond!

## POLITICS STUDENTS & HOLLY LYNCH MP

A big thanks to Holly Lynch MP for coming in to discuss issues with the politics students at NHGS on 5th April. Lots of interesting questions asked about Brexit and many other topics.





## MFL MATTERS

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### TRANSLATION BEE (YEAR 9)

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A morning of celebration and croissant consumption as the winners of each Year 9 form were invited to a breakfast and a chance to chat with Year 12 A level students who had tested them in the first round. Then, on to the serious stuff; the school competition. Only 2 places available in each language to get into the Regional Final in May. What an amazing standard these Year 9 students set; with a combined score of 204 correct sentences in French and 211 correct sentences in Spanish competition was fierce. With

an unassailable lead of 34 correct sentences in 3 minutes, **Isobel (9.6)** was our winner for French but second place was only decided after a tie-break, with **Libby (9.5)** edging into the regional final, just one point ahead of **Hema (9.1)**. **Ahmed (9.6)** was our extraordinary contestant in Spanish with an incredible score of 37 correct answers in 3 minutes, followed very closely by **Sanna (9.1)** with 36 answers. Congratulations to our winners and well done to Jen, Evie, Alexandra, Saalihah, Hema, Elohor, Emma, Taylor, Lily, Alishah, Ehemem and Isabel for making it such a close competition.



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### SPELLING BEE (YEAR 7)

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Students worked extremely hard to compete in the school competition earlier this term. 100 words to learn and spell in French and a school competition later, we had 3 clear winners. Very well done to all competitors; there were some excellent efforts. Congratulations to the school winners who have been working very hard to learn another 50 words! **Dee Dee - 7.6, Lucy - 7.1, Asha - 7.1**. A special well done to **Dee Dee (7.6)** for her outstanding efforts and performance at the Regional final in Manchester.



## JUVENES TRANSLATOIRES - BRAVO TOM

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**Tom, an A level French student in Year 13**, has his translating skills recognized by the European Commission. His entry in the European wide Juvenes Translatores competition gained "a special mention" and he was invited to spend a day at Europe House in London, learning more about careers in translation, meeting professional translators and attending a translation workshop based on authentic EU documents.

**Here's what Tom said of his visit:** *"Getting the opportunity to visit the European Commission in London for the Juvenes Translatores celebration event was a great experience. I really enjoyed the talks from EU translators who talked about life as an EU translator and the problems they have to overcome, as well as the talks from literary translators. The translation workshops were particularly useful as I gained skills which will hopefully be useful in the translation part of my A level French exam. I found the overall Juvenes Translatores experience fun and very useful and I'm grateful to the school for allowing me to take part."*

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## DEBATING SOCIETY - FINAL!

Congratulations to Rebecca and Grace who won the debating competition today proposing that this house would introduce a fat tax. They made some interesting arguments around whether a state that offers free healthcare has the right to force its citizens to adopt healthier lifestyles to make that sustainable; whether a fat tax would, rather than punishing the poor, be advantageous to improving their health and life chances; and whether the tax would force manufacturers into reconsidering the qualities and ingredients of their products. Jacob and Ben put up strong opposition around stigmatising, stereotyping and the problems of living in a nanny state - as well as dealing with points of information well.

The final, chaired very professionally by Ben (Y12), was the culmination of months of debating. It has been excellent to see everyone's confidence grow and the quality of speeches improve week on week. After half term, we'll look at some impromptu debates and group debates, as well as practising some different styles ready for external as well as internal competitions next year.

If you're a student, and you've never tried debating, next term is a good time to start. SF4 Thursday lunchtimes. All welcome.

**Miss Kent and Mr O'Neill**

## MUSIC DEPARTMENT NEWS

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It's been a busy term in the music department. Thanks to all staff and students who have helped to make this possible.

Following on from the success of the Christmas Carol Service all ensembles have been working hard. The 50 strong rock choir produced epic performances at the Performing Arts showcase at the end of March and started off the evening with excellent performances of 'This is Me' and a medley from Les Misérables.



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### MFY SUCCESS

This year our **Big Band** took part in the **Music for Youth Regional Festival** at Rastrick High School. Excellent performances, as always, under the expert leadership of our Brass teacher Mr Barnes. The adjudicators were very complimentary about the way in which the group were able to perform with understanding of style. Some highlights from the feedback include:

*"What a mature and sophisticated sound you make as a Big Band! Wow!"*

*"Each section is technically very able in their own right"*

**We now wait to see if we've got through to the national festival in Birmingham.**

### INSTRUMENTAL EXAM SUCCESS

Several of our students have recently passed instrumental exams. Congratulations to the following:

Evie – Trinity Guitar Grade 3 with Merit

Lakshitha – Trinity Guitar Grade 3 with Merit

Shauna – ABRSM Viola Grade 7 with Distinction

Daniel F – Trinity Grade 4 Drum Kit with Distinction

Daniel H - Grade 5 Rock School drum kit (Pass)

## MUSIC CONTINUED...EASTER EXTRAVAGANZA

The beginning of April saw the Easter Extravaganza concert which featured many of the school's ensembles.

As ever the performances were of the highest quality and really displayed the abilities and talents of our music students. Over 100 students from all year groups performed in ensembles of varying sizes with music from classical and popular genres. Hard work in rehearsals was in evidence and every ensemble that performed on the night was a highlight.

The evening opened with a confident performance from the Saxophone Ensemble and this was followed in contrast with the guitar ensemble, ably led by year 10 student Irving. Daniel then stepped up and played a confident solo on drum kit and then the Big Band performed two pieces with the style and skill that we have all come to expect. Choral Group completed the first half with beautiful performances of 'Lean on Me' and 'A Million Dreams'.

The Second half featured performances from our String group and Woodwind group. Concert Band gave us a very enjoyable performance of Disney At The Movies and the Rock Choir finished the evening off in style with their performance of Les Miserables Medley.

*My wife and I were last night invited by my niece, to see her daughter Emily play in the school concert, (she plays Alto Sax in the concert and swing bands). Having been a lover of this type of music since I was a young man (72), I was not sure what to expect. The answer AWESOME. Music is a great leveller, whereby a young person and an adult can sit side by side and play the same piece. The standard on the stage last night for their ages was as good as some pro swing bands I have seen. May I take this opportunity to thank yourself and your music staff for all time and effort they have put in over the months and years to reach such a good standard. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!*

Mrs Pegg received many compliments at the end of evening. Many of our audience were reduced to tears (in a good way!) from the finale of the Rock Choir's Les Miserables Medley – notable solos came from Eve, Caleb and Eleanor.

Mrs Pegg thanked the Year 13 students for their commitment to the music department throughout their time at NHGS as this was to be the last time that they would perform with the various ensembles that they were members of before leaving to take their A level exams.

**Ruby (Year 13) and Elizabeth (Year 13) also received an 'Outstanding contribution' in recognition for all of their dedication to the music department throughout their time at NHGS.**

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## MUSIC COMPETITION



Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April saw the finals of the Annual NHGS Music Competition. As ever the standard in all classes was very high and the adjudicator, Cllr David Hall, had some hard decisions to make. However we thoroughly enjoyed the day and were treated to some excellent performances. The technical ability and musical skill of the students at our school never ceases to amaze me. They do not find performing in front of others – especially their peers – easy but the resilience and commitment to their instrument that they all showed this week was incredibly admirable. I would like to offer my personal congratulations to all students who initially entered – thank you. Without you all ‘having a go’ we wouldn’t have a music competition. To those that made it through to the final, whatever the outcome, you should be very proud of yourselves and I hope that you take the experience and allow it to help you to grow as a musician – come back next year and do it all again!

### Winners of the 2019 Music Competition were:

<b>Beginner of the Year:</b>	Maddy (Viola)
<b>Junior Brass:</b>	Rosie
<b>Junior Strings:</b>	Emma
<b>Junior Piano:</b>	Debora
<b>Junior Voice:</b>	Ivy
<b>Junior Percussion:</b>	Daniel
<b>Junior Guitar:</b>	Evie
<b>Junior Woodwind:</b>	Joseph
<b>Ensemble – Duet:</b>	Debora & Lakshitha

### Ensemble – Large ensemble:

Gala, Eleanor, Scarlett, Eve, Trishna, Irving, Henry and Dillon

<b>Senior Percussion:</b>	Dillon
<b>Senior Voice:</b>	Scarlett
<b>Senior Guitar:</b>	Zach
<b>Senior Piano:</b>	Eve
<b>Senior Woodwind:</b>	Trishna
<b>Senior Strings:</b>	Shauna
<b>Senior Brass:</b>	Tom

<b>Junior Performer of the Year:</b>	Joseph
<b>Senior Performer of the Year:</b>	Dillon



PERFORMING ARTS UPDATE

**Matilda - An NHGS Masterpiece - The Highlight of Four Years Work**  
**"Crown Them As Stars With Medals All Invisible"**



Often when deciding to coordinate a full scale theatre production I could liken it to waking up on the first morning of your Easter or Summer Holiday and deciding that decorating the whole of your house is a good idea. Initially you are filled with drive and enthusiasm, and, never seem to remember from your previous experiences the plethora of challenges and pitfalls such projects inevitably bring. When we decided to stage "Matilda in 20 Minutes," almost a year to the day before it came to stage, I had no reason to anticipate anything other.

With the popular acclaim for our production of Rice and Lloyd Webber's 'Joseph' two years ago, Owen Crawford and myself had come to recognise that what appeals to the public and the students is a show with the right name. Matilda very fittingly met this criteria. Four years ago when we first launched Performing Arts at NHGS the very first showcase we staged included a performance of the song "Revolting Children" from the musical Matilda. We also used the song "When I Grow Up," from Matilda, in our 2018 "Here I Am" showcase. It was re-choreographed to emulate

the challenges of "growing up" and those of the grammar school entrance test, something all the students could relate to. All of this left Matilda the musical very prominent in my mind.

As we went through the various processes of initial workshopping, auditions and then into rehearsals near the start of October, slowly but surely, our production of Matilda began to develop. As the weeks of rehearsals turned into months I slowly became aware of feeling something about a production I had not experienced for many years.

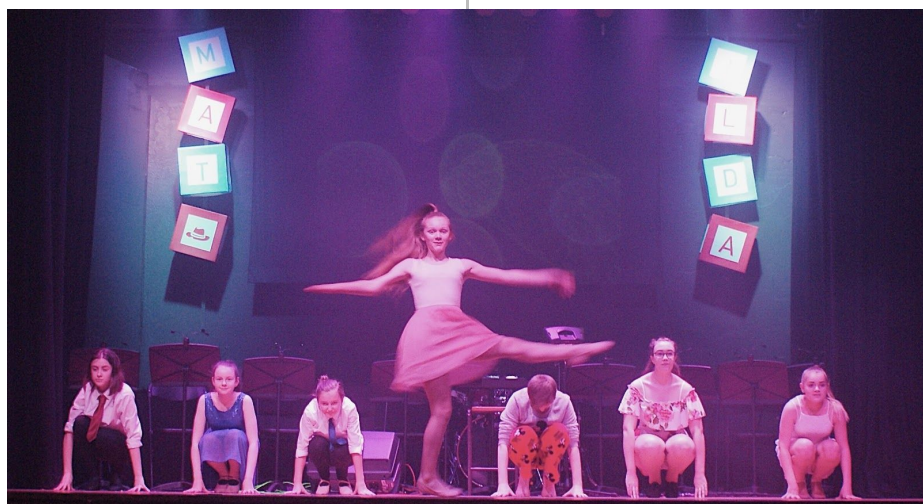
We had a cast that came to be seen as faultless in their dedication and commitment. There was also a band of NHGS students, whose approach to accompanying the cast, playing the original West End arrangements of Tim Minchin's music, was the most professional and supportive I have had of a theatre band ever. We had a production team of a director, technical director, musical director, a technical team and no less than six choreographers sharing the responsibilities of "making it a thing." A far cry from that very first performing arts showcase of April 2016. Most surprisingly the on stage cast that kept appearing on free lunchtimes asking if they could rehearse the dances in Matilda even more. It all felt too good to be true. I think what I was feeling was the question, "This is all going far too well, when is something going to go wrong?"

Inevitably we did have one or two crises in the final two weeks of rehearsals. Having told the cast two weeks before the show, "I don't think you're ready.....I know that you're ready," many were then hit with a flu type bug. Care had to be taken to nurse many of the cast, including Molly who mesmerised the audience as Matilda, over the finishing line - fighting off coughs, sneezes and sore throats. Their collective determination to carry on and not let the production company down was quite humbling to

experience. Alongside this, we lost guitarist, Irving, with broken fingers a week before the show, heroically deputised by our guitar teacher Peter Cain. Finally, clarinetist Maddie sustained a very painful knee injury dancing in "You Can't Stop The Beat," minutes before the Thursday performance of Matilda. And that, thankfully, was as bad as it got.

After six strenuous months of rehearsals we reached opening night. The performance of Matilda was preceded by a number of students in the school, including some of the cast of Matilda, performing a number of "lollipops" as the conductor Thomas Beecham used to call "encores." The lollipops included the school's 80 strong Rock Choir, brilliantly guided by the Head of Music Rachel Pegg, performing a 'Les Miserables' Medley as well as the show stopping song 'This is Me' from the film 'The Greatest Showman.' There were also smaller but equally brilliant

ensembles including a dance troupe dancing to 'You Can't Stop The Beat' from the musical 'Hairspray' as well as vocal performances of songs by Ed Sheeran, Jar of Hearts by Christina Perri and an empowering performance of "Sisters Are Doing it for Themselves." I didn't see the first half of the first evening because I was doing a last minute rehearsal with the Matilda band to allow Peter Cain to familiarise himself with the music of Matilda. It is fitting to say at this point, the only reason why we could fit in this rehearsal for Peter was that both evenings were supported by several NHGS staff as well as the NHGS Parents' Association and a team of NHGS student stewards who did a brilliant job of looking after the 130 performers as well as two full houses of just under 500 for the two evenings combined. Their support was greatly appreciated and made such a difference to how smoothly each evening flowed.





Thus I found myself in the orchestra pit, a little flustered, a little nervous, and not quite sure how things were going to go with the performance of Matilda. As the show began, all my usual apprehensions quickly disappeared. Matilda had come to life, twelve months of preparations were coming to fruition, and, six months of dedication from the whole Matilda company presented the students of NHGS in front of their public at their very best. We all came off stage that first night feeling very satisfied with what we had achieved. Come the Thursday evening, thinking things could not get better, amazingly they did. I am rarely lost for words, but I was. I can always find something in a performance to advise on how it could be better, but I couldn't. Now, having the experience of twenty years of staging theatre productions, I knew something incredible had just happened. In our production of Matilda we had had the best cast, band, production and choreography team all working together at the

same time and all their contributions created an NHGS and theatrical milestone. When I eventually managed to make it from the orchestra pit to the drama room a few minutes after the curtain closed I was met by an on stage cast of students in floods of tears. I feel they too also knew they had just been involved in something incredible, possibly, a life changing moment.

In this past four years Performing Arts at NHGS has grown at an alarming rate of knots. In that time I have seen many people join us, leave us and a few, possibly as passionate and slightly obsessive as myself, stick by me. Whilst I could tell many personal and inspiring stories about many of the production team and company of Matilda there are a small number who have walked every step of the four year journey with me. I am talking about our initial lighting and sound team of Aron and Nathan as well as Owen Crawford, the best "teacher" I've

ever had, and our principal choreographer Amaya. We have gone through some scary and challenging times together this past four years. When required we have picked each other up when things were difficult. I know NHGS would never have staged Matilda and been able to celebrate its success without their unerring dedication and support. It meant a great deal to me to be able to share the success of Matilda with them in particular. We are reaching the end of a mini golden age in Performing Arts at NHGS. Aron, Owen and Amaya all leave us at the end of next year.

Within two weeks of Matilda ending I felt the need to fill the void Matilda had left. I needed a new project to keep my mind occupied. As I type this, I have just come away from a meeting with Owen and Magda MacGilvray, the director of Matilda, to start making decisions on what we may stage as our "main production" next year. I am glad to say a decision had been made. Whilst I cannot "name names" at this early stage I think I can promise you, come March 2020, a further musical production which will wow audiences as much, if not more, than Matilda did. Most importantly I feel confident our choice of production will enthuse the present and incoming members of our NHGS Performing Arts company whilst being a fitting thank you and goodbye to Owen, Amaya and Aron. They will be hugely missed, by me at least.



Following the success of the second evening in particular we held an "after show" party on the Friday lunchtime. A time, as Owen would say, "to allow us to tell each other how wonderful we think we are." Speeches were said, cards and gifts exchanged. Those who know me, particularly the cast of Matilda, will know I am rarely

lost for words. The copious number of emails I sent the cast over the six months of rehearsals became a bit of an affectionate "in joke." In the final couple of weeks of rehearsals one word kept coming to me whilst still doing all kinds of preparations for Matilda. That word was "Stop!" This in itself reminded me of the opening line

of W H Auden's poem "Stop The Clocks." I decided in my "thank you speech" to the Matilda company, rather than blathering on indefinitely I would aim to be concise and to the point and took the basis of Auden's poem to write something the Matilda cast would appreciate and relate to. My "thank you speech" read as follows:

***Stop all the clocks, cut off the internet  
Prevent Mr Marsh from sending another email yet.  
Silence the band, the technicians and the cast  
Matilda will soon be no more, just a joyous  
memory of our past***

***Those who were there, those that walked the  
journey  
What they did was not just normal, good or even  
worthy  
Crown them as stars with medals all invisible  
Were they the best? They were the best.  
One word enough; Incredible.***

***Matilda, for some, was our North, our South, our  
East and West,  
Our working week and oft' no Sunday rest.  
We fought the fight, we gave our all  
We answered to the endless call. Matilda!***

***You stars, are you still wanted now? May be not  
for a while.  
But, as we pack up the props, pour away the newt  
and put away Matilda's books one last time,  
Still time to stop and smile...for a while.  
Dismantled is the stage  
It's time to turn another page.  
Matilda, Matilda; it's time to rest.  
They truly were the very best.***



Guy Marsh, NHGS Director of Performing Arts, April 9th 2019.

## NHGS SPORTING NEWS

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### FUTSAL



#### U13 Futsal Tournament at Brooksbank - 28th February

NHGS came runners up on goal difference! They just missed out on first place but demonstrated some fantastic football throughout the tournament.

- Brooksbank v NHGS: 0-1 (Maya scoring)
- NHGS v Trinity: 1-0 (Florence scoring)
- NHGS v Halifax Academy: 3-2 (Maya 1, Florence 2)
- NHGS v Crossley's: 1-0

Well done all, Miss Brooke.

#### U12 Calderdale Indoor Hockey Tournament - 12th March

NHGS finished in 3rd place.

Well done to the Year 7 hockey team. Great team work displayed by all and a first time for some representing NHGS in a sports team.

Congratulations to Jessica who received a nomination for Player of the Tournament by the other schools.

Miss Brooke.

### HOCKEY



### DANCE



#### Y9 at 'The Great Big Dance Off' - 14th March

NHGS Year 9 students Ella, Ellie, Freya, Lila and Minnie competed for NHGS in the northern heats of 'The Great Big Dance Off' at the Victoria Theatre, Halifax.

It's the first time that we've entered this competition, and we came 6th in the North of England finals.



## U19s West Yorkshire FA Cup Final WINNERS 20th March

CONGRATULATIONS to the NHGS U19s football team who won the West Yorkshire Schools FA Cup Final, beating Mirfield Free GS 5-4 on penalties. Special thanks to Mr Downing. Well done to everyone.

### FOOTBALL



### ATHLETICS



## Indoor Athletics Championships - 20th March

A great effort from NHGS at the Indoor Athletics Championships. A fourth place finish for Year 7 Boys and Girls, narrowly missing bronze by just 2 points and 4 points respectively. Year 8 Boys came 5th overall.

The behaviour of all students and Year 10 coaches was exemplary. Mr Tansey.

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### FOOTBALL



## U15 West Yorkshire Cup - 26th March

A HEROIC DEFEAT at Brighouse in the U15 West Yorkshire Cup. Despite a 2-0 scoreline the team were fantastic and played with real energy and spirit. Ciaran was denied 4 times by outstanding saves and Mackenzie was also denied a 25 yard volley. MVP goes to Harrison.

## RUGBY LEAGUE



### RUGBY LEAGUE GRAND FINALISTS 2019 - 27th March

One step closer to retaining the Calderdale Schools rugby league crown. Wins against Ryburn, Calder and Lightcliffe with a loss against Brooksbank. Finals date to be confirmed.

### U12 Netball - West Yorkshire Youth Games - 28th March

U12s Netball represented Calderdale at the West Yorkshire Youth Games at Leeds Beckett University.

- Won 6-3 against Salendine Nook
- Won 7-1 against Kettlethorpe
- Narrowly lost 6-5 to Rodillian Academy
- Lost 5-1 to Woodhouse Grove

The girls were awesome and played some phenomenal netball. Super Proud. Mrs Heaton.



## RUGBY LEAGUE



### Y9 Rugby League - Yorkshire Schools RL Plate Competition

13th March - Year 9 RL team played Kettlethorpe, Wakefield in the Yorkshire Plate competition winning 36-0 in wet and windy conditions.

20th March - Year 9 marched into the semi finals of the Yorkshire Schools RL Plate Competition beating Ryburn 28-14.

For the semi-final we will travel to Hull to play Archbishop Sentamu. Date tbc.



## RUGBY UNION



### White Rose "Day of Rugby" - 28th March

NHGS students from Year 7, Year 8 and Year 10 travelled to Ilkley RUFC for the White Rose "Day of Rugby" competition. Year 10: Beat Sirius Academy West and South Craven. Drew with Outwood Easingwold and lost to Settle. Years 7&8: Drew with Trinity Academy and lost to Harrogate and Rodillian. Great afternoon of rugby union, Mr Doyle.

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### Y8 Rugby League - Calderdale Schools' Plate Competition - 2nd April (Supported by Year 7)

Year 8 RL squad of 10 players made it into the plate final of the Calderdale Schools competition.

Final to be played at King Cross Park ARLFC against Trinity Academy Halifax

Tuesday 14th May 17:00 KO

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## CALDERDALE SCHOOL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Ciaran played in the English Schools' FA semi final match which was played against Sunderland on the 6th April at Brighouse Town AFC. Calderdale lost 3-2. Great Game to watch and Ciaran was superb.

Sunderland now play Aldershot at Stoke City FC in May. Mr Doyle.

Some of the students that have represented Calderdale School Boys this year at U13, U14 and U15 level.

U13 - Freddie and Harry

U14 - Aman, Charlie and Harrison

U15 - Ciaran

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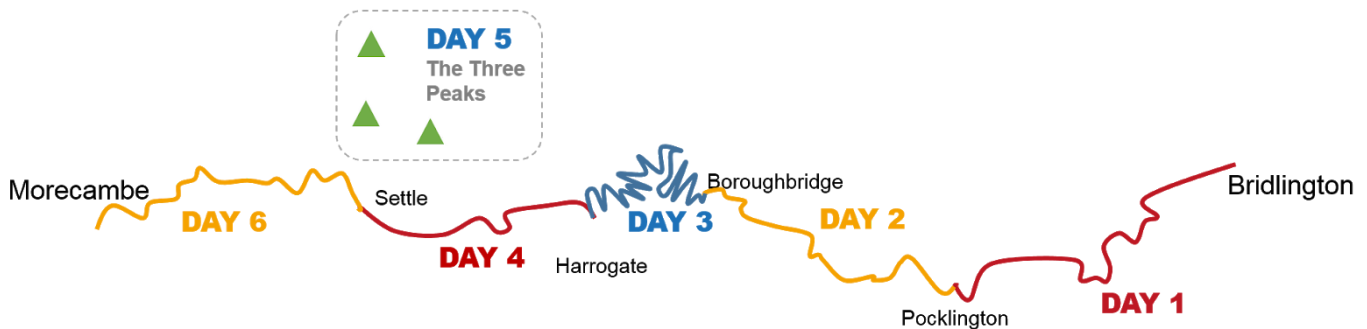
COMING SOON

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- Krakow/ April 2019
  - Coast2Coast 4/ June 2019
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## NHGS COAST 2 COAST 4

*Way of the Roses – in reverse with the Dales Three Peaks*



On the 30th of June around forty NHGS students will be riding the yearly Coast 2 Coast ride to raise money for the school. This will be the 4th event of its type and as Mr Jugroop explains below - this will be the most challenging Coast2Coast to date.

Please support the riders by making a donation. They will definitely deserve it!

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/NHGSC2C4>

We are also looking for sponsors for our cycle jerseys. Please contact [n.platt@nhgs.co.uk](mailto:n.platt@nhgs.co.uk) for more information about this opportunity.

Funds raised will go towards the Technology Block.

*Now we are about to take part in our fourth trip. To answer your question, yes we are stepping up the challenge once more. We are going back to the Way of the Roses route. This time, for timetable and logistical reasons, we need to do it backwards from Bridlington to Morecambe. This will mean we could have a head wind and also the climb out of Pateley Bridge to Settle is going to be tough, very tough.*

***But we did not want to stop there!***

*On the penultimate day we are also going to fit in the Three Peaks. Yes! You did read correctly, the students are going to ride coast to coast and also walk Pen y Ghent, Wharfedale and Ingleborough in the same trip for the same cause. Their school. The students as always will be carrying their own gear and cooking their own food. This is going to take a massive effort and the students are going to need to have strength and commitment to be successful. Please show your admiration and support by donating on this Parent Association Money Giving link*

**Mr Jugroop**

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION - nhgspa.org.uk

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**'PLEASE SUPPORT OUR PRIZE DRAW'**

**For instructions on how to do this, please refer to the Parents' Association email sent on Friday 12th April. The cut off date of 20<sup>th</sup> April for entries for the May draw – Thank you.**

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**We have banked over £1600 from the generosity of friends and families supporting the PA fundraising; serving refreshments, selling raffle tickets and tea/coffee donations during the Spring Term**

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**YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE:**

NHGS Netball Team dresses were paid for by the Parents' Association.

**We want to do so much more, so please support us by joining the monthly Prize Draw.**

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**WE NEED YOUR HELP**

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**Cash for Coins**

Can we refill our bucket in Reception? We are still collecting ANY foreign money such as pesetas, rupees or even euros if you have left over coins or notes from your travels. Please have a look through your drawers over the February half term. All donations gratefully received.



**Parents' Consultation Evenings**

The PA will be serving refreshments at all Parents' Consultation Meetings - please remember to bring some small change and support the fundraising. This is also a great opportunity to talk to the PA about the different ways that you can help.

**Match  
Funding  
£500!**

**Match Funding**

Match giving, or match funding, is a simple way to maximise the fundraising efforts of the NHGS PA volunteers. It is an informal, albeit corporate, arrangement between a company and an employee. Usually, a company pledges to match a sum of money relating to the amount the employee has either raised or donated to a charity. It is likely that there will be an upper limit and certain criteria applied, such as the recipient organisation being a registered charity. We have been lucky enough to secure £500 of extra funding through one of our volunteers. If you volunteer for PA events, please see if your employer offers match funding as it could mean additional money for the school.

**OTHER KEY DATES**

Monday April 29th	School Opens Summer Term
Monday April 29th	Assessment (Y8/9) (Ends Friday May 10th)
Monday May 6th	School Closed – May Day
Monday May 13th	External Exams (GCSE & A Levels) Commence
Monday May 13th	Year 10 & 12 Internal Exams (1 week)
Friday May 24th	School Closes Half Term Holiday (3pm)
Monday June 3rd	School Opens
Tuesday June 4th	St Omer Parents' Meeting (Y8)
Thursday June 20th	Monitoring 3 Home Years 7, 8 & 10) (email)
Tuesday June 25th	Open Evening (5pm - 8pm)
Wednesday June 26th	Staff Training Day - School Closed.
Wednesday July 10th	Activity Week commences
Saturday July 13th	Year 8 Residential to St Omer (late evening)
Thursday July 18th	Return of Year 8 Residential to St Omer (late afternoon)
Thursday July 18th	School Closes End of Term (12 noon)