



NATIONAL  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
ACADEMY

---

# Lent Newsletter

---

*Easter Address from Mr Brailsford - Headteacher*

This term we have seen so much tremendous work continue across our Academy. Students have taken advantage of the many exciting, varied and diverse opportunities available to them including the Alpe d'Huez ski trip, ARCH ambassadors work, a visit from Cambridge University, An Inspector Calls theatre trip and Sixth form have had the chance to visit and tour the magistrates court in Nottingham (for good reasons only I assure you). Across the year we have well in excess of 50 enrichment opportunities for our students to engage with. The feedback we have had from students and parents has been incredible and on behalf of our staff thank you for the wonderful letters, emails and social media postings around our trips and visits which do mean a lot to us all. These do get shared and displayed in our staffroom.

This term we have had a brilliant mental health week with activities each day supporting students in coping with a variety of issues. We have just finished careers week, which is in addition to the excellent programme of advice and support we provide our students all year round. We are pleased to announce that in the last few weeks we have successfully recruited our own full-time careers advisor Ms Jamison, who is expected to start providing further advice and guidance shortly after Easter to all students. In addition to a new careers advisor, we have successfully recruited a fantastic new music teacher, Mr Wood, for September and we are interviewing a new science teacher and assistant SENCO before the Easter holidays begin. We have added 2 new staff to our brilliant midday supervisor team this term and hope to add more before the end of the academic year.

Easter is always a time of reflection and for me as a Headteacher, it is also a time of preparation and thinking ahead. Our year 11 have completed their mock exams and there is no time to slow as Easter approaches. Throughout the mock exam process students have taken a very mature approach and we have been impressed with the positive attitudes and value students have placed on their practice exams. All exam access arrangements for year 11 have now been completed and that deadline passed, so now it is full steam ahead into the exam period, where students will be supported to achieve the best academic outcomes possible and to progress to their next destination.

Finally, as usual we gave our students the opportunity to have their say on school matters this term. Not only do all students have access to student council representatives and to have issues raised at academy council meetings, but we do also have an electronic system which has gathered the views of almost 700 students across all year groups this term. Particular strengths highlighted from that survey include how safe students feel, how happy they are with the careers advice and guidance they receive now and how often they receive feedback from their teachers and have the opportunity to respond. Almost 95% of all students felt they were able to focus and concentrate on their work in class which is fantastic news for everyone and shows how the consistent approach and application of our behaviour policy is having an impact. I am sure this is also a key factor in retaining our talented staff and allowing them to teach our students, so thank you for all of your support around behaviour but also with the high standards we continue to set and expect.

Have a wonderful Easter with your families and I hope you enjoy our latest newsletter!



# 'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10

## Alpe d'Huez Ski Trip 2023

It was a privilege for all the staff involved to be part of this year's ski trip to the magnificent Alpe d'Huez resort in the French Alps. We took a range of students from year 8 up to year 11 who all integrated exceptionally well. What I found most rewarding about this trip was the way that students from all ages supported and encouraged each other throughout the week. The ski trip was an excellent opportunity for students to build skills, resilience, and have a lot of fun whilst participating in a variety of après activities such as ice skating, quiz night, tobogganing, games night and of course, a bit of snowball throwing.

One of the most significant positives of the school trip was the opportunity for students to develop their skills. Skiing requires a great deal of coordination, balance, and control, and it was fabulous to see these skills develop over the week. The experience of learning a new sport and mastering it also boosted all students' confidence and self-esteem. After the carnage of the first morning, where many of the students couldn't even walk up a simple slope, it was amazing to see the progress made by all students over the week. By the end of the trip, the beginners had progressed amazingly, completing their first green runs. Similarly, the intermediate and advanced group had also progressed well, skiing blue and red runs with increased confidence.

The weather was excellent too, with sunshine and blue skies most days. We did have heavy snow fall towards the end of the week and Friday morning the winds were very bad resulting in the lifts not opening. Not deterred by this, the ski instructors took the students on a walk around the resort. This proved very successful and the students were taught about the local tourism industry and we had a visit to a magnificent church in the centre of town.

The journey home proved challenging because our flight was cancelled but overall this trip was very successful and for some I am sure will be life-changing.

*Mr A Cockerill - Associate Leadership Team*



---

# The Lion King: The Experience

---

February 8th & 9th were nights to remember – when National students performed their rendition of Disney’s classic stage show – The Lion King. The show was a fantastic experience for all and students of all ages took part with acting, dancing and singing. The sheer number of friends, family and staff that came to watch was simply amazing, there were even people standing at the back so they didn’t miss out!

Charlie, year 11, said the show was, “simply exhilarating!”

One audience member commented, “It was very beautiful, and I was smiling all the way through. I’m so proud of you all!”

Ivy, year 10 said, “It was a really amazing experience in which I formed lots of new friendships throughout. All the staff were incredibly supportive and kind.”

We cannot wait for the next performance!

*James H (Pumbaa) – year 11 student*



---

## Sixth former campaigns to end period poverty

---

One of our sixth form students, Anya, has launched her period poverty project this term. A pack made up of single use sanitary pads, sustainably sourced sanitary pads and a reusable sanitary pad has been offered to all of our female students. Girls were also informed of all the various locations within school that they can access sanitary products when and if they need. This project was set up to tackle period poverty and also to lower the stigma and embarrassment for girls when they are on their period.



---

# World Book Day

---

Our annual celebration of World Book Day, took place on Thursday 2nd March. In the run up to the day, we held a Scholastic book fair in the library, students were able to browse the fair for reading inspiration and purchase books if they wanted, using their £1 World Book Day token.

On the day there was a 'character hunt' competition for students in KS3, 15 members of staff wore book character badges for the day to be "spotted" by students who then had to then match those characters to the books on their competition sheet, working together as a tutor group to earn positive behaviour points and prizes.

Our KS3 Book Club were treated to a book tasting session at lunchtime, which is a fun way to introduce students to new books they might like to try.

Finally, of course, our usual staff dress up, encouraging some lively discussion with our students about the book characters we became and our reasons for choosing them.

*Mrs J Prestwood - LRC lead*



---

# Careers Week

---

Last week saw the academy have it's very first Careers Week, where students engaged with some fantastic activities and learnt about what opportunities were in their future! From learning about what it takes to be a Journalist, to a Personal Trainer, to a Forensic Scientist, our students took part in brilliant lesson-based activities and explored the directions their subjects might be leading them in. Additionally, we dedicated time in our Tutor Groups to making short and long-term action plans for their futures. We hope our students found the experience enlightening and encouraging!

*Miss O Hyde - CEIAG lead and teacher of English*



---

## ARCH Ambassadors trip to Minster School

---

It was so great to be able to take our ARCH Ambassadors on a trip to Minster school to collaborate with the Minster's WORKS Ambassadors. WORKS stands for Wisdom, Optimism, Resilience, Kindness and Service, and is Minster's version of ARCH values. The day focused on leadership development and exploring more of what our vision and values are and why they are important, plus collaboratively planning for our upcoming Easter services. We look forward to hosting Minster's WORKS Ambassadors here at National soon!

*K Ritchie - Academy chaplain*



---

## Big Question Week

---

Big Question Week this year focused on the questions: What is faith? Is God real? What do you believe and why? We had guest speakers come in to speak to all our year groups with an engaging but thought-provoking talk. Our KS3 students also had a session with our chaplaincy team exploring more about faith and doubt and how we only need a small seed of faith. This week was a great opportunity for students to hear some intriguing and inspiring questions that encouraged them to reflect more on what they believe and why.

*K Ritchie - Academy chaplain*



---

## Education Sunday

---

We joined the congregation of St. Mary Magdalene's Church and Hucknall National C of E Primary School on Sunday 29th January for Education Sunday. Anna, our Head Student, helped to lead the service, Keziah, our Chaplain, gave a short talk, and our ARCH Ambassadors led the prayers. Our year 7 students had also written prayers prior to the service and these were distributed to members of the congregation. It was a privilege to join together with the congregation to celebrate education in our local schools.

*Mrs K Wall - Assistant headteacher*



---

# Head of Year Highlights

---

## Year 7

Another busy term has passed by, and we certainly have lots to celebrate in year 7. We have taken part in the children's mental health week competition whereby students were asked to design a bookmark and also, February was our fantastic school show, The Lion King! So many of our year 7 students joined the cast, which is fantastic to see our youngest children embracing all aspects of school life.

This term in year 7 we have had an incredible 464 star of the lessons. 7A is the tutor group which has received the most positive points, a total of 2444. Well done to 7A and their tutor Mrs Guest. The student with the most achievement points at the time of writing this, goes to Ruby W with 138. Well done to you Ruby!

I wish you all a safe and restful break and look forward to seeing you all after the Easter holidays.

Best Wishes,

*Mrs Hopkin - Head of year 7*

## Year 8

We've had another very busy and very positive Lent term in year 8, where plenty has been achieved both in and out of the classroom.

Being in school every day that it is open, is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and their wider development; and the average attendance for year 8 has improved this term from 92.9% before Christmas, to 94.5% at the time of writing. Well done to 8B, leading the way with an average attendance of 97.3% this term, and the 81 year 8 students with 100% attendance every day since the Christmas break.

In lessons year 8 have been awarded over 12,500 positive achievement points this term, including 385 star of the lessons being awarded. 8G lead the way this term with over 2000 positive achievements. Individually, congratulations to Taye A 8B, Sophie K 8B, Kalia A 8G, Ava B 8C, and Harley D 8F for being our five most rewarded students this term.

Well done to all year 8's for all their positives this term, and enjoy the Easter break.

*Mr Gilham - Head of year 8*

## Year 9

It's been an excellent term for Year 9 who have really improved in all aspects of their education at the academy. We have received less late marks, less behaviour points and received Star of the Lesson awards more regularly.

A huge well done to Holly R with 102 achievements, Morgan B with 77 and Bethany W with 68.

Our Year 9 girls football team reached the semi-final of the Cup and have gone from strength to strength.

Our Year 9 boys basketball team has excelled and improved since the teams creation, winning their previous game.

One of the larger events this term was the school Ski Trip which was heavily represented by over 20 Year 9 Students, whose behaviour was exemplary and represented our year group with pride.

*Mr Richardson - Acting head of year 9*

---

# Head of Year Highlights

---

## Year 10

I continue to be very pleased with Year 10 as a community for continuing to work hard into the second term of their GCSEs.

This has been reflected in the increased number of achievement points gained as a year group – as it stands at the time of writing Year 10 have now gained 24177 achievement points – this an excellent modelling of ARCH values and I continue to be very proud of them as a year group.

Every student in Year 10 has positive achievement points and of the 210 students now in the year – a fantastic 75 of these have zero negative behaviour points.

Year 10 had the opportunity for a residential ski trip this term. The feedback from staff leading the trip was positive and their behaviour was good allowing an excellent time to be had by staff and students attending the trip. They also showed resilience and adaptability as the flight on the return journey was cancelled – causing the group to be delayed.

This term there have also been a number of additional assemblies delivering advice on careers which have presented Year 10 with a number of different post-16 pathway options.

I hope that Year 10 will continue to focus on our ARCH values as they enter the third and final term of Year 10.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a Happy Easter.

*Ms Craven – Head of year 10*

## Year 11

Year 11 have showed an amazing attitude to their studies in these final weeks before the Easter break.

All students have worked hard in their final set of mock exams and have been focused in lessons, ready for the start of the exam period in May. I told my own year 11 class this week that they are on the home straight now and they need to keep up that momentum!

Every year 11 pupil should be proud of what they have achieved so far in what has been a challenging year. A special well done to the highest credit earners so far this year: Alicia H, Charlie B, James H, Freya J, and Abby B – well done!

Happy Easter!

Mrs Newns - Assistant head of year 11





# Prom shop

At National Academy we believe it is important that all students in Year 11 have the opportunity to experience and enjoy Prom, free from the worry about any cost implications this may have for parents and guardians.

With this in mind, I have set up a prom shop, stocked with a range of clothing and accessory items perfect for prom. If you are the parent or guardian of a year 11 student and would like to book a confidential appointment to see what is available in our prom shop, then please email: [marandajones@nationalacademy.org.uk](mailto:marandajones@nationalacademy.org.uk).

For students in year 11, attending the prom is about so much more than what they choose to wear, it is about celebrating the end of their academic studies at National Academy, looking to the future and being with friends.

*Mrs M Jones - Head of PACE and Associate Leadership Team*

## Looking after your mental health during exam season

**LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IN THE LEAD UP TO EXAM RESULTS**

Tips to help you handle exam results anxiety

- 01** Focus on the present moment and the here and now. Practice mindfulness to help with this process.
- 02** If you start to worry about your exams, engage in some 'worry time'. This is a great way to postpone any health-related worries you might be experiencing.
- 03** Learn how to manage negative emotions and physiological changes. Use breathing techniques to help you stay calm and to control your mind and body.
- 04** Engage in activities that provide you with a sense of enjoyment.
- 05** Focus on your strengths and things you are good at.
- 06** If you start ruminating about your exam results, try and alter your environment or distract yourself.
- 07** Don't be afraid to talk to someone about how you are feeling or any worries you are experiencing.
- 08** Look after your physical health. This will help you to feel better about yourself. (Good night's sleep, well balanced diet)
- 09** Be kind to yourself and demonstrate some self-compassion.

@BELIEVEPHQ

---

# Sporting Fixtures

---

**Football:** The year 7 girls team are in the semi finals of the South Notts cup facing Carlton Le Willows having won 1-0 at Frank Seely School on Tuesday 28th March. They also played Newark Academy just after Christmas and won 4-1. Great work team!

The year 8 girls are having a fantastic year reaching the last 16 in the National School's Competition. They played Arnold Hill in the semi final of the South Notts Cup and they WON 5-1 in torrential rain and will now play in the final of the cup, date and opponents to be confirmed. Well done girls, so proud of your commitment and determination. Thank you also massively to Mr Leitheiser for his continued support and coaching.

Our year 9 girls team recently played West Bridgford in the semi final of the South Notts cup and lost 4-1 But are still to play The Becket School in the Nottinghamshire Schools Cup on Tuesday 18th April at Becket.

The South Nottinghamshire Cup saw the year 10/11 girls play West Bridgford. Unfortunately, due to a few illnesses we had to ask some students to play who would ordinarily not have played football. But they were amazing. Even though the team did lose 3-1, they were outstanding, showing real grit and determination to carry on playing right up until the final whistle. A huge thank you to those girls who stepped in and made it possible for the year 11s to play their last game in a National Academy shirt.

The year 7 boys football team have also had a successful season this year in the South Notts Cup and are due to play Rushcliffe Academy in the semi final

**Netball:** The Year 10s were due to play in the county netball competition on Monday 27th March. However due to unforeseen circumstances this has been rescheduled for Thursday 11th May.

**Basketball :** The year 8/9 team played a recent triangle of fixtures over two evenings. During this fixture the team played Brunts Academy and Meden Academy. The team won all their games during this triad tournament.

Our year 10/11 basketball team played against Holgate Academy on Wednesday 29th March and won 32-26. This was their last opportunity to play for the academy before they leave, so a great result! Man of the match: Sam.

*Mrs M Jones - Head of PACE and Associate Leadership Team*



---

# Faculty Blog - Science

---

How do you keep five years' worth of information in your head? And how do you make sure that all of that information will be there when the 'exam panic' hits in the hall?

These are questions that we have been thinking hard about in the science faculty recently. The nature of learning science is that there will always be lots of information to work with and lots of ideas to consider. Even the word 'science' itself comes from the Latin for 'knowledge', so it's important that we think not only about how we communicate this knowledge, but also how we make sure it sticks. This year, we have been using Hinge Assessments in our GCSE science and child development lessons. These have been written so that they help the students to recall the knowledge they have gained over the last group of lessons, then challenge them to show they understand it and can apply it to a new scenario. The idea of bringing together all the component parts of a topic to build a strong, coherent idea is intended to help students to build secure, long term memories that can be drawn upon later, rather than individual lessons that can easily be forgotten or misremembered.

Our science curriculum has been designed to regularly revisit and build upon knowledge and skills from year 7 to 13 – we introduce big ideas early on and then gradually increase the level of detail, or the complexity of the concept that is being studied. With the addition of a little touch of 'National Academy Magic', such as building log flumes to learn about energy; making 3D models of cells or modelling electricity by moving around the classroom in a conga line, we like to make sure that the experience of science lessons is memorable in lots of ways! The school's vision of experiencing 'Life in All its Fullness' is at the centre of our planning – we want to share our passion for science and our joy in interacting with and understanding the world around us. It's also important to allow chances to think about big questions, such as our responsibility for the Earth, the origins of the universe and the ethical problems that scientific advancement can sometimes present.

This time of year is a good opportunity to reflect on some of the successes we have experienced too. Our STEM club started the year by completing a series of team building challenges, including making catapults and rafts to transport the greatest possible masses and researching and designing a plan for humans to live on Mars. Year 11 students in both science and child development have recently completed their mock exams, and we have seen exceptional achievement from Terry, Ava, Esme, Jaydn, Jack, Leo, Georgia, Liam, Josh and Josie already this year – well done to all of them!

We hope that through the lessons we teach in the science faculty, students will leave feeling proud of their achievements and with lasting memories, not only of the scientific knowledge they have acquired, but also of the experience they had in getting there.

*Mr B Walton - Teacher of science*

---

# Faculty Blog - Humanities

---

## **Designing a place where stolen voices can be heard.**

As teachers we are given a certain amount of freedom to design and deliver a curriculum to students that best meets your children's needs. The KS3 curriculum is constantly being revised and redesigned to adapt to the students changing world. As a team of Humanities teachers, we therefore reflect each academic year on how best to broaden the horizons of our fantastic young people, reflect on our ARCH values and support children to deal with the complex issues of the twenty first century.

How do we respond to BLM? Are students aware of the struggles of minority groups? Do we reflect on the impact of our actions upon the environment? Do we challenge the "white saviour" narrative of British history? These are a few of the questions we wrestled with in September that subsequently led us as teachers to draw in "stolen voices" into our curriculum. Yes, education is about equipping our students to have the best qualifications so that their life choices are broader. But we believe that living "life in all its fullness" does not come about solely as a result of having better job and consequently higher earnings. Our values of respect and charity are rooted in our belief that "life in all its fulness" comes about as a result of students being aware of their place in the world. How their world has been impacted by historical and geographical events and how in turn they can contribute culturally to a more respectful and empathetic world.

To give you a flavour of how this questioning of the purpose and intent behind our curriculum impacts what students learn in lessons we only have to look at this week. Year 7 are currently analysing the impact of the Mali, Zimbabwean and Mongol Empires upon the development of European culture. Year 8 are in the midst of reviewing the links between the North Atlantic Slave Trade and the Civil Rights Movements. Year 9 are evaluating the impact of the Partition upon India and Pakistan. 'Life in all its fulness' is therefore about a broad curriculum that we hope best prepares our young people for a challenging and ever changing world.

*Mr M Jones – Head of humanities*



---

# Dates to remember

---

Monday 17th April 2023 - Return to school for all year groups

*Monday 1st May 2023 - Bank holiday- Academy closed*

Wednesday 3rd May 2023 - Year 7 AMP evening

*Monday 8th May 2023 - Bank holiday - Academy closed*

**Monday 29th May - Friday 2nd June 2023 - Academy holiday**

Wednesday 7th June 2023 - Year 9 Holocaust visit

Thursday 8th and Friday 9th June - Year 8 visit to Nottingham University

*Friday 16th June 2023 - INSET day - Academy closed*

Thursday 22nd June - Year 11 prom

Thursday 29th and Friday 30th June - Year 10 geography fieldwork trips

Monday 3rd July - Year 12 AMP evening

Monday 3rd July - Year 12 work experience week

Monday 3rd July to Friday 7th July - Hagg Farm trip

Tuesday 4th July - Parent Forum meeting

Wednesday 5th July - Enrichment day

Thursday 6th July - Arts day

Friday 7th July - Year 10 visit to HSFC

Monday 10th July - Friday 14th July - Rhineland, Germany trip

Tuesday 25th July 2023 - Last day of term, school ends at 2:25pm

Thursday 7th September 2023 - Start of the new academic year - all students return

The National Church of England Academy  
Annesley Road | Hucknall | Nottinghamshire | NG15 7DB  
Phone: 0115 9635667  
Email: [adminoffice@nationalacademy.org.uk](mailto:adminoffice@nationalacademy.org.uk)  
[www.nationalacademy.org.uk](http://www.nationalacademy.org.uk)



**Minster Trust**  
for education



**NATIONAL**  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
**ACADEMY**