



**Pleckgate**  
HIGH SCHOOL

**NEWS**

# A Newsletter featuring Pleckgate High School's achievements

OCTOBER 2022

## A message from the new Headteacher.....

Dear parents/carers,

I am delighted to share with you our first half-term newsletter. We have had an excellent start to the new academic year with particular mention of our new Year 7 pupils who joined us from a range of different primary schools and have made a positive start to life at Pleckgate. We look forward to meeting parents and carers of Year 7 on 8th November where you will meet form tutors, receive more information about our curriculum and your child's progress in school.

Year 11 have also made an excellent start to their final year in school. Prefects welcomed Year 6 parents and pupils to our Open Evening and Morning events held in September and we received many comments about how well pupils spoke about their experiences at Pleckgate and their hopes and aspirations for this year and beyond. They are a credit to our school and we are exceptionally proud of them.

It is a privilege to be Headteacher at Pleckgate High School. I work with a wonderful team of staff who are dedicated to supporting your children, academically and pastorally. As you will see from this newsletter, we are delighted that so many pupils take part in the wide range of opportunities and experiences provided.

We are also grateful for your continued support and value our partnership with you.

Aishling McGinty

Head of School



## Theatre visit to 'Blood Brothers'

The English department took Year 9 pupils to see a performance of performance of Willy Russells' critically acclaimed, multi-award winning, legendary musical, 'Blood Brothers' which was held at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool. Pupils developed their appreciation and literary knowledge of a key text, and consolidated their interpretations of the universal themes and ideas explored.

Theatre staff and members of the public praised Pleckgate pupils' excellent conduct and mature attitudes; all were gripped by the intriguing premise of twins separated at birth and brought up on either side of the class divide, and the captivating performance ended with Mrs Jackson, Miss Bland and Miss Spence in tears!

Rayhann K. commented, "I loved how the actors appeared on stage from the seating area. I loved the realistic settings. I loved how the story made us change our emotions." For Hussain, "The songs were the best part." and Kairi S. revealed, "This has been my favourite trip so far; the twists and turns were exciting and I'd love to go again!"

Hurulaine felt, "The acting was superb!"

Shifa S. agreed saying, "It was lovely seeing the script come to life with my own eyes, and even better with a front row view."



# 2022 Open Evening and Open Morning

Thank you to all who attended our Open Events during September. Pleckgate pupils provided school tours to prospective pupils and parent/guardians. As always, the feedback was positive, praising our pupils for their politeness, knowledge and friendliness.

As a subject, Religion and World Views not only looks at religions of the world but also wider subjects. Maryam, a year 10 pupil, was one of the helpers, showing off a Prayer Tree where pupils could make a wish!

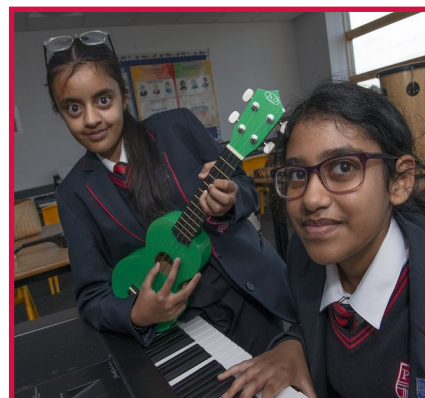
The History Department turned into a medieval apothecary where pupils could smell 'urine' – (it definitely wasn't!) to decide if it was sweet, salty or bitter! Here, Year 9 pupil Laila is showing Samara what to do.

In Computer Science, Year 11s Hashim and Faizan were showing off programming – and how you can play a tune on bananas!

In the English Department, Year 11 Hannah helped Amirah paint a mask to depict the masquerade ball in Romeo and Juliet. There were plenty of books and activities on show and a 'Beat the Teacher' competition where Yahya, from Daisyfield Primary School, tried his best!

In the Science Department, our informative Year 10s assisted prospective pupils look at animal and plant cells through a microscope while they also pointed out the human digestive system.

If you require further information please go to [www.pleckgate.com](http://www.pleckgate.com).



## Year 7 get their new iPads

Year 7 pupils have now received their own iPads which are provided by school.

With 280 pupils starting at Pleckgate in September, the iPads have now been distributed and are now being used in all lessons to support pupils learning.

Head of Year 7, Mr Pickup said, "All subjects use them to set homework and also provide lessons for pupils who may be absent from school so they can continue with schoolwork. Google Classroom is used to set tasks and pupils submit work to their class teachers using the same app".

As part of the 'Launch event' Mr Pickup emphasised to all Year 7 parents how the, "iPads are an essential part of teaching and learning for all pupils at Pleckgate including homework.

In PE and in Year teams, the iPads are used to promote extra-curricular activities and successes throughout."





# Revealed—our new look Library!

We are delighted to reveal our newly refurbished library.

The redesign was inspired by the ideas and suggestions of pupils who submitted their thoughts on what they would like to see in a school library.

Significant investment has been made into creating an environment in which pupils can develop their love of reading. The library has undergone major refurbishment with new shelves, chairs and books.

In addition, the library has invested in new reading materials which pupils indicated they would like to have within their school library.

The new books and dedicated reading spaces compliment the online library to which every pupil has access through their school iPad. The new books in the library were chosen by members of the school council.

As well as the fantastic new facilities, the library has provided another group of pupils by way of an opportunity to further develop their leadership skills in the capacity as School Librarians. This role is vital in ensuring pupils can attend the library during break and lunch times.

Year 11 Prefect librarians, Abbie and Saffiyah both say, "Being a school librarian in this fantastic library is developing our skills in communicating with others, organisation and computer skills which will help us in the future." Other pupils have described the new library as 'amazing' and 'a comfortable learning environment' and 'classy!' We hope that this is a space that will be very well used and on which will help to further promote the love of reading at Pleckgate.



## National Essay Writing Competition

Aisha decided on the topic of 'Music and Religion' in the National RS SMSJ Essay Writing Competition, a competition which gives pupils opportunities to have their work read and commented on by top academics in Philosophy, Religion and Ethics.

"We had to write a piece with a maximum of 1,000 words and I decided to look at differing religions and their spin on music," said Aisha. "Some religions disagree with using music while some use music to enhance their faith. I was surprised to come second overall!"

Other topics chosen by Pleckgate pupils were 'The Purpose of Life', 'What Makes Us Human?', 'Has It Gone Too Far the Other Way?' and 'What is Reality?'

Safa and Sabiha were runners-up in their categories while Amani and Amilah were selected to enter the prestigious competition.

Aisha won some Penguin Classic books and a £10 Amazon voucher from Pleckgate's Religious Education department.





# Congratulations to our DofE 2022 cohort

Congratulations to all of the Year 11 pupils that have achieved their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award this year. Having embarked on this challenge in Year 9 they have successfully managed to complete their Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections. They took on a wide variety of activities, ranging from: supporting charities; helping Year 7s with reading; improving fitness by doing martial arts and playing cricket; developing skills in pottery and designing apps.

A fantastic achievement in completing their final expedition involving overnight camping, outdoor cooking and using a compass to navigate directions on long outdoor walks.



## Headteacher's Rewards breakfast

One of the ongoing rewards, introduced through suggestions made by the school council, was for a group of pupils to be selected to celebrate success every month with a breakfast hosted by the Headteacher. This event is always a success.

Mrs McGinty enjoys meeting pupils who are selected from all year groups for a free breakfast!

Pupils at October's breakfast were chosen by their respective Head of Year for improving their attendance, attending extra-curricular clubs or generally showing exceptional behaviour.



## Pleckgate's 100% Attendance Club

A new initiative to promote and celebrate 100% attendance is being launched in school. The 100% Attendance Club will become an integral part of Pleckgate life and supports our ethos of 'Attend to Achieve'. Research shows that there is a clear relationship between excellent school attendance and academic achievement. Year after year, pupils with the best school attendance achieve the best results. We are passionate about providing pupils with the best possible life chances and, as such, know that they must 'attend to achieve'.

Membership of this club can be achieved by pupils attending school for a full week. This gives them an entry into both the weekly and the end-of-term draws. The more occasions that they have a weekly attendance of 100%, the more chances they have of winning a prize in the end-of-term draw. There is a range of rewards, including celebration activities, trips and weekly 'pop-up' events throughout the year.

Mr Cadman said, "there will be fantastic weekly opportunities for pupils with 100% attendance to be entered into the 'Attendance Lotto'. There will be regular opportunities throughout the year for pupils and their families to access rewards and prizes and we welcome your support in encouraging your child's attendance".

Mrs Rackley, Attendance Manager said, "we recognise 100% attendance as being a huge achievement and one that needs significant rewards and celebrations! Therefore, only pupils with 100% attendance will be granted access to the club, and that they will become eligible for weekly rewards".



# Competition Winners celebrate success

## Zaibaa to go on a special trip

Pleckgate as an Anne Frank Trust Link School, is one of just 10 schools in the UK promoting a society safe from prejudice and discrimination and works closely with the Trust to achieve this aim.

Anne Frank was one of 1.5 million Jewish children murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust. She was just 15 when she wrote a diary during her time in hiding. Her life is used by the Trust to empower young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination. Pleckgate appointed a number of Anne Frank Trust Ambassadors with Zaibaa being selected to visit Anne Frank's House in Amsterdam at the end of the month.

In commenting on her selection, Zaibaa said, "only 16 children from all over the UK have been selected so it's a huge achievement and honour for me. I am so excited to go and see the history. The story of Anne Frank affects me a lot, what she went through and the emotions. She was 13 when she started writing her diary and 15 when she died so she was close to my age and it hurts to think that. She lived a lot of her life in fear and desperation yet, in her diary, she is still positive and we can learn a lot from her. I want to make changes, I want to help stop prejudice and discrimination and make a difference."



## The Spirited Arts competition



Year 11 pupil. Aminah, has won an international arts competition. The Spirited Arts competition has run for 18 years and 3,000 entries are sent annually to NATRE (National Association of Teachers for Religious Education) for judging. Many entries are from the UK but they also receive entries from as far afield as Hong Kong, Australia, Thailand and more. Entries can be in art, poetry, photography, dance, music, drama and sculpture.

Five themes are set and Aminah, 15, entered 'Streets of Gold: Searching for God'. "I decided to do a painting as I enjoy art and I like to draw at home," said Aminah.

"The story behind my painting is about a child who has suffered a lot of pain and grief, so he decides to turn his head to God by worshipping next to the sea in a calm, quiet place. When he does this, Jesus goes to him and shows him what is right and wrong, leading him to the right path.

I have also drawn a dove that represents the Holy Spirit showing that this is the light guiding Christians. I have used bright colours to show peace and happiness and because it is a reminder that God has blessed us with beauties in the world and so it's our duty to take care of it.

The waves I have drawn start to become lighter. This is to show how much the people have suffered in their daily lives from the start and then when the colour gets lighter, they turn to God to get rid of their grief. I am a Muslim but when I studied the Nicene Creed in my RE lesson it showed me the different ways that Christians understand God. What stood out to me, as I continued my studies on Christianity, was the similarity in the belief that we can overcome suffering in our own lives and help to ease the suffering of others by following God's path."

There were five winners in each category and Aminah will receive a certificate and a £20 Amazon voucher.



# The Pleckgate Blues are in full support

The dedication and commitment shown by Pleckgate footballers was recognised by a trip arranged for 97 pupils to watch the recent Blackburn Rovers V Sunderland held at "fortress" Ewood Park.

Mr Clegg arranged for another trip to take place top Ewood Park. This is part of the Rovers initiative to boost community involvement.

The excited Pleckgate pupils gleefully waved their Rovers flags with pride before the kick-off!

Pleckgate pupils witnessed a display showing how hard work allied to talent will bring success. Brereton-Diaz was always main outlet for Rovers and his finishing was the difference between the two sides.

After a cagey opening the key moment of the game came in the after 30 minutes when former Leeds and Tottenham starlet Jack Clarke went down in the box. Much to the disgust of former Rovers boss Tony Mowbray play was waved on and a flowing Rovers move ended with a world class curled finish by Brereton-Diaz that would have graced any game.

After half time the Pleckgate pupils had a sense of Deja vu as once again home-grown hero Scott Wharton powered home a close-range header at the start of the second half. Sunderland then dominated possession but stout defending from Rovers and the lack of a killer pass saw Sunderland frustrated. In added time, Ryan Hedges almost scored a contender for goal of this or any season when volleying a ball from 40 yards that grazed the post. Debutant Jake Garret was voted man of the match at Ewood but there was no doubting that Brereton-Diaz was the star of the show.

The win was even sweeter as it meant that Rovers replaced fierce rivals Burnley at the summit of the Championship. The 3 500 travelling Sunderland fans including our own Mr Stokes and Mr Papa went home disappointed.

The Pleckgate pupils were buzzing and hopefully some will have listened to the words of the Blackburn End in full voice and "just not be able to get enough of... BLACKBURN ROVERS!!!"

We cant wait to go to another fixture!!



The Pleckgate Newsletter will return again in Half Term 2!

The Pleckgate Pupil School Council