



Pleckgate
HIGH SCHOOL

NEWS

A Newsletter featuring Pleckgate High School's achievements

May 2022

A message from the Head of School

Dear parents/carers, I hope that you are all well. Your children have been involved in a variety of experiences and activities this term. We are delighted that so many pupils participated in activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh, sporting events, maths and English competitions, as well as many visits and trips. Whilst it has been challenging over the past two years to organise activities and events due to the pandemic, as you read through the newsletter you will appreciate the effort and hard work taking place by all Pleckgate staff to enable these exciting experiences to take place.

On 19 May 2022 we welcomed our new Year 7 parents/carers, where the opportunity was taken to showcase our outstanding school and provide information on what parents and pupils can expect when they join us in September. I am pleased to say that once again, Pleckgate High School is oversubscribed with 280 new pupils starting the next stage of their exciting educational career in September.

Our school receives many positive comments from visitors or members of the public whom we meet when out on school trips. Some of the comments relate to the polite, well-behaved and respectful manner of our pupils, who are an asset to our school.

We are proud to share the many experiences that are highlighted in this newsletter and, as always, are grateful and thank all parents/carers for their ongoing support.

Mrs A McGinty

A.M. McGinty

Head of School

Pupils get ready for Oxplore Book Club!

Pleckgate High School's new book club is thriving, with pupils relishing their new reads!

Pleckgate have joined a national '**Oxplore Book Club**' where they read selected books and get the chance to ask questions of the authors.

The current books the Year 7s and 8s are reading are: 'The Crossing', 'The Girl of Ink and Stars' and 'Oh My Gods.'

Head of English, Mrs Patel, said: "**Mrs Hughes** runs the Book Club and the aim is to share our love of reading and encourage reading for pleasure."

"We wanted pupils to enjoy reading and have the opportunity to discuss what they read; The Oxplore Book Club allows pupils to read books they may not usually read and it gives pupils the opportunity to discuss their thoughts on the characters, themes and ideas in the novels."

"Book club members are pupils from different KS3 classes and they all share the same outlook – a love of reading."

"There are a variety of books – linked to diversity and current political issues. They are in different forms such as poems and there are fun and fantasy elements."

"They also get the chance to attend a national webinar with the authors and submit their questions; pupils have had their questions selected and answered in this public forum, which is fantastic."

"We want to instil a passion for reading and encourage pupils to read a range of diverse novels."

Saima said: "The books selected are enjoyable and interesting and you learn new skills. The Book Club is fun."

Asiya said: "I joined because I thought it would be a good experience to enjoy reading and improve my English."

"The books are interesting and ones I wouldn't normally select myself. I enjoyed 'Oh My Gods' the best."

Amna said: "'Oh My Gods' is an entertaining book and it was great to be able to ask questions of the author."

Aiman said: "It's not every day you get to talk to an author. I like reading with everyone so you can share your thoughts about the book and talk about them."

Aanisah added: "'The Crossing' was my favourite book and it was not a book I would normally choose but I enjoyed it. I look forward to Book Club every week."



Pupils are Published Authors!

Eleven Year 7 pupils from Pleckgate High School have had their poems published in a book.

Young Writers asked pupils to submit poems for the book entitled: 'Empowered: Rhymes of Fire.'

English teacher, Mrs Hughes, said: "The pupils wrote poems about empowerment - what makes them feel empowered."

"The poems ranged from femininity and racism to everyday worries and the pupils explored a lot of issues and ideas and were really creative."

"There were 10,000 entries to the Young Writers competition; 260 poems were chosen and we submitted 11 entries and all made the book."

Safiyyah said: "My poem was about feminism and how men are treated differently to women and how unfair it is that women have less opportunities than men. It was great to see it in print."

Aizah's poem was entitled: 'You're beautiful and no one can stop you.' "I enjoyed composing it," she said.

Mehak said: "My poem was a message to my future self to not worry."

Daniyal added: "I wrote about what I would wish for if I could have one wish – world peace. It was amazing to see my poem published and have my name in a book."



Football Trip to Blackburn Rovers

Blackburn Rovers 3-1 Derby County

As a reward for the dedication and commitment that Pleckgate footballers have shown through the long winter months a trip was arranged for 70 pupils to watch Blackburn Rovers v Derby County at Ewood Park. This is part of the Rovers' initiative to boost community involvement in the club, kindly organised by Yasir Sufi, the son of our very own Mr Sufi.

Hopefully, the evening has inspired Pleckgate pupils to make the most of their sporting talent and get down to Ewood regularly.



Netball Trip to Manchester Thunder

Manchester Thunder 71-51 Wasps

As a reward for the dedication and commitment Key Stage 3 netballers have shown through the long winter months a trip was arranged to watch **Manchester Thunder v Wasps at Belle Vue Sports Centre**. The Year 7 and 8 teams have both finished runners-up in their respective Blackburn with Darwen netball leagues, only losing one game, which makes them our most successful netball teams in the last 20 years!!!

On the way home, the sensational new girl group 'Backcoach Girls' serenaded the rest of the coach with a variety of hits (apologies to the people of Manchester and Bury!!!). As one spectator commented, the girls were amazing ambassadors for Pleckgate High school and are a credit to their school and their families. Hopefully, the trip has inspired the girls to keep working hard at their netball and emulate the success of Manchester Thunder.



Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Congratulations to **Aadil, Amal, Armaan, Hamza, Muhammad Umair and Saaleha** in Year 11 for achieving their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award this year.

Having embarked on this challenge in Year 9, despite the disruption from the pandemic, they managed to complete their Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections. They took on a wide variety of activities, ranging from supporting charities to helping Year 7s with reading; improving fitness by doing martial arts to playing cricket and developing skills in pottery to designing apps.

After a few postponements, their Expedition section consisting of two days' hiking with an overnight camp sleeping in tents was finally completed in a chilly and damp October 2021!

We are very proud of you all.



Strike it Lucky! Tenpin Bowling Trip

A group of 15 Year 8 pupils were bowled over to be selected for a reward trip to TENPIN bowling in Blackburn after impressing their tutor with their positive attitude to school or being amongst the top achievement points in the Year group. Pupils had a competitive game of bowls, laughing at **Mr Clegg's** feeble attempts to get a strike. There was time afterwards to enjoy the arcades. It is hoped that such trips will motivate pupils to continue working hard, develop their social skills and get actively involved in all areas of school life, particularly having missed out over the past two years of Covid and lockdown.



Pleckgate's Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

Pleckgate's Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are ready to make a difference. The Year 10s appointed will be studying The Diana Award Anti-Bullying Programme, in memory of the late Princess Diana and will act as mentors for the younger years and have already started to put their ideas into practice.

During Anti-Bullying Week, Pleckgate High School pupils wore odd socks, watched videos and had discussions about bullying during form time and the Year 7s are going to write an Anti-Bullying Charter.

Emaan said: "I wanted to be an Ambassador so I can stop any bullying."

Aziza said: "Bullying is a serious matter and I want to make sure it is dealt with seriously."

Maya said: "I think this role will allow me to help other people and give me good experience in the future. I am proud to have this role."

Imaan added: "Anti-Bullying Week gives you a special week to think about problems people encounter. You do not think about it every day but this gives you a week to focus on it."

Pleckgate High School is hoping, through the Diana Award, to become a host school where their Anti-Bullying Ambassadors train pupils from other schools in the area.



EPT Great Debate

The transformation of Burnley and Blackburn was discussed by pupils at the first **Education Partnership Trust** Great Debate.

Three schools from the EPT- Eden School, Burnley High School and the hosts Pleckgate - came together as pupils and talked about how their local area has changed in the 70 years of Queen Elizabeth II's reign. It was **judged by Mr Cocker, who is Director of Education at the EPT**, alongside his role as Headteacher at Pleckgate.

Pleckgate **Year 9 pupil Hudaa** said: "I have had to do a lot of research on my topic of religion and immigration. When my grandparents came to Blackburn there wasn't much diversity; now the area is very diverse. "I like public speaking and history is my favourite subject so I have enjoyed doing this."

Pupils from Eden School picked a particular image from East Lancashire, such as the bridge on Yorkshire Street in Burnley and the site of Marks and Spencer's, to talk about how the area has developed and the reasons why, with all students making the connection to both Burnley and Blackburn's huge part in the Industrial Revolution.

Organiser, Pleckgate's Head of History, Mr Bajkowski, said: "It was an absolutely fantastic evening. Our pupils are what make our Trust such an amazing place to work in and we look to give them every opportunity to read and take part in spoken debate. Hearing all the pupils talking so passionately about their heritage and locality really brought home how much they and their schools care and are part of the fabric of their local communities."



Year 10 Maths Feast

Year 10 Pleckgate High School pupils got their numbers right after coming out on top in the Year 10 Maths Feast.

The event was run by the Advanced Mathematics Support Programme and was held at Burnley College, with Pleckgate pupils up against other Lancashire schools, including QEGS, Unity College and Blessed Trinity.

Pupil **Madiha** said: "It was a full day event and there was a lot of problem solving and complicated questions. It was much tougher than I expected - it really tested you. I found it challenging."

Head of Maths, Mr Khan, said: "These were our best mathematicians in Year 10 and they deserve huge congratulations for winning a tough competition. They will take Maths and Further Maths in Year 11 and competitions like this help them progress even further."

As well as a certificate, they received a £15 Amazon voucher from Pleckgate for representing the school so well.



Pleckgate is an Anne Frank Trust Link School

Pleckgate has become one of just eight schools in the United Kingdom to become an Anne Frank Trust Link School.

This is a new initiative by the Trust set up last year and means staff and pupils at the Blackburn school will have the benefit of working more closely with the Trust.

The Anne Frank Trust promotes a society safe from prejudice and discrimination.

Anne Frank was one of 1.5 million Jewish children murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust at the age of just 15.

She wrote a diary during her time in hiding and this and her life is used as a starting point by the Trust, to empower young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

"There is something about Anne Frank's story and her life which resonates with young people today, even after all this time," said **Jonathan McKee, an Anne Frank worker.**

"We want to empower young people to challenge prejudice and discrimination, inspired by Anne Frank.

"We come into schools and put on various workshops so that students can be a voice for equality and help promote being kind and respectful to others.

"Pleckgate is a school we have been visiting for many years as the Anne Frank Trust and schools were invited to apply to be a Link School.

"Pleckgate's application was so strong. They are passionate about challenging prejudice and discrimination. They have knowledge of any issues at the school which need to be addressed and they want to do something about it.

"Being a Link School means we also educate staff, as well as help them to knock down barriers which come from prejudice. It makes teachers aware of how they can tackle any problems and how they can relate to students who may be a bit different.

"Also, by educating students we hope they will educate their peers, this is central to what we do, empowering people to educate others.

"The students at Pleckgate are so receptive – they want to make a difference."

Head of Religious Education, Mrs Savage, said: "Being a Link School is a huge honour. It means that as well as pupils being educated, teachers will also get involved in more events with the Anne Frank Trust.

"We are always striving to give our pupils a well-rounded education. We are aware that education is not just in the classrooms and being a Link School will give them more opportunities to meet people and share their thoughts.

"It gets them thinking about what they can do in the future about prejudice and discrimination and how they can stop it." The latest workshop was around anti-semitism with a number of Year 9 pupils.

One of them, **Hudaa** said: "I have learnt a lot about anti-semitism and it makes you think about what is needed to change the world.

"We are the generation who can do it. The story of Anne Frank is still so relevant to us and we need to be better."



Thumbs Up for Pleckgate's 'For Hire' Facilities

Pleckgate has opened up its state-of-the-art sports facilities to the Lancashire public and one of them, **Kevin MacLaren,** says his young **Futsal team are thriving.** "We were looking for somewhere local to train and I went on 'Schools for Hire' and Pleckgate came up and we haven't looked back."

School Business Manager, Mr Clark, said: "We decided we wanted to open up our facilities to the whole community during out-of-school hours so everyone can benefit. We have an indoor sports hall, 2G full-size all-weather pitch, activity studio and drama studio for hire. Schools have amazing facilities and we are an **Ofsted Outstanding** school, so we want to make sure we are at the centre of our community." For further details about the facilities go to pleckgatehigh.schoolhire.co.uk.



For information
about **Futsal**
contact Kevin
on
07826 238567

Eco Bingo

This half term Pleckgate's Eco Committee have a fun challenge for you and your family to complete. This is a great opportunity to bond with your family and have a good time whilst doing it.

Over the break the Eco Committee would like you to complete the various activities on our Bingo card to be in with a chance of winning an eco-friendly goodie bag!

For your chance to be entered into the prize draw all you have to do is follow these simple rules:

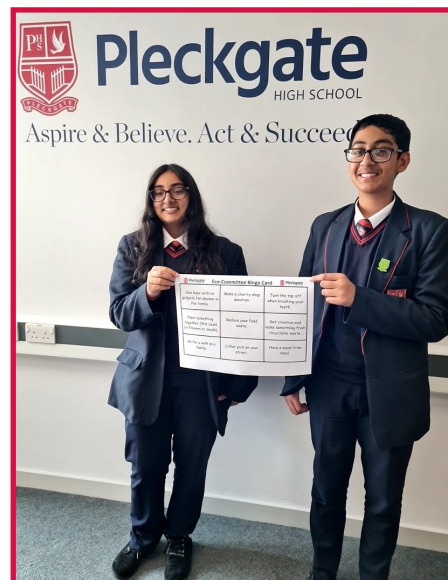
- For this challenge you will need to tick or cross off the activities you've done.
- You must send in evidence that you have completed each activity to be entered. This could be photographs or short summaries.
- Evidence must be given to Mrs Banks in F34 or via email at jbanks@pleckgate.com by the end of the day on Wednesday 8th June.

There is also an amazing opportunity to be entered into the prize draw twice if parents give a quote on why it's important to be a school aiming to improve our environment.

Bingo card:

One hour with no gadgets for anyone in the family	Make a charity shop donation	Turn the tap off when brushing your teeth to reduce water waste
Plant something together (this could be flowers or seeds)	Reduce your food waste	Get creative and make something from recyclable waste
Go for a walk as a family	Litter pick on your street	Have a meat free meal

The Eco Committee hope you enjoy this competition and have a great half term!



Trip to see Beauty and the Beast Musical

This term the music department took 50 pupils to see Beauty and the Beast live at the Palace Theatre in Manchester. With a cast of 34, including Courtney Stapleton as Belle and Shaq Taylor as the Beast, the show produces a truly magical performance. The musical has run for more than 13 years on Broadway and remains among the top 10 longest running shows in Broadway history.

The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the production, whilst being a credit to the school, showing a great respect for the performers. It was a fantastic opportunity for the pupils and something they will remember for years to come.

Aisha in Year 7 said "I really enjoyed the musical. It was so much fun, as well as the orchestra at the bottom of the stage. The actors' acting was brilliant and how the beast magically changed into a prince with different clothes and a different face shocked me (in a good way). Thank you for taking me on this trip. I really enjoyed it and I hope we can go somewhere like this again in the future!"

