



The Pleckgate High School Newsletter

December 2024



Dr Chris Hines MBE visits Pleckgate!

Environmentalism Dr Chris Hines MBE has inspired our Eco-Club to be a force for change.

Chris took time out of his busy schedule to spend a day with the Eco-Club looking at the school and helping them suggest changes which will make the school 'greener.'

Chris, who has spent 30 years championing environmental causes, said: "It's been a pleasure to be here and talk to pupils about the challenges but also about finding solutions, which is important. It's important to create a future where plants, animals and people live in harmony."

Chris spoke at a Year 7 assembly about sustainability, looking at ways our school can be more energy efficient and ways to reduce the school's carbon footprint.

The Eco-Club pupils interviewed the school's Business Manager Mr Clark and Site Supervisor Mr Holden about the sustainability of the school. They questioned them about solar panels, waste water, recycling, LED light bulbs and generally about saving energy and reducing waste in school.

Pupil Nimra said: "I joined the Eco-Club because I want to help the planet and implement change to do this."



Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors

Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are a visible presence at Pleckgate to help anyone who may feel they need to talk.

The Year 10s wear purple badges and also lanyards and can be seen in the Year 7 and 8 school yards at breaks and lunch-times.



Fatima said: "It's all about giving that bit of extra help. It may be pupils who are too scared to approach a teacher but would feel comfortable talking to another pupil if they have any issues or problems. It's a safe space so people don't keep things bottled up."

Hadia said: "I chose to be an Anti-Bullying Ambassador because I want everyone to feel safe and comfortable."

The Anti-Bullying Ambassadors were originally trained through The Diana Award, in memory of Princess Diana, which is about empowering young people to make positive change.

Our current School Ambassadors will also train the Year 9s to step up into their role in the next school year.

BBC 500 Words competition finalists

We are thrilled to announce that "The Terrifying Story" written by Saafa and "The Blind Mystery" written by Sara have advanced to the next stage of BBC 500 Words.

BBC's 500 Words is the UK's largest children's writing competition for children aged 5-11 years old.



From tens of thousands of submissions, only approximately 5,000 have been chosen for further evaluation by the esteemed Reading Agency.

Congratulations Saafa and Sara on this remarkable achievement! Keep up the fantastic work and best of luck to all participants!

Support over the holidays



During our assemblies and pastoral sessions, we have shared information with all pupils regarding available support, advice and guidance that can be accessed from a range of agencies whilst the school is closed.

Information has been shared with pupils via their Google Classroom areas signposting some of these services.

Additionally, our school website contains lots of useful content, information and advice regarding help that can be accessed by young people, see www.pleckgate.com/pd-pleckgate.

We also have access to The Online Safety Hub which has been designed to provide parents with a range of resources, information, tools and guidance to help protect your children from harm in the online world. www.educationpartnershiptrust.onlinesafetyhub.uk

It includes information on the latest hot topics when it comes to keeping children safe. These topics include how to manage your child's screen time, understand the latest gaming platforms and what they mean for your child's safety.



Enriching experience on a religion and worldviews trip to Bradford!

Exploring the rich tapestry of religious diversity, our pupils went on a journey that broadened their horizons and deepen their understanding of different faiths. The trip consisted of visits to various places of worship, each offering a unique glimpse into the spiritual practices of different religions.

At the Sikh Gurdwara, pupils were immersed in the vibrant atmosphere of prayer.

Pupils witnessed intricate rituals at the Hindu Mandir. From ancient traditions to modern interpretations, pupils gained insight into the multifaceted nature of Hindu worship.

Stepping into the Jewish Synagogue, pupils were captivated by the history and symbolism woven into every aspect of Jewish faith.

By engaging with practitioners first hand, pupils developed a deeper appreciation for diverse faiths and gained valuable insights into different worldviews.



Sana wins Jeffrey Boakye book for outstanding write-up during #BlackHistoryMonth

Year 7, Sana's exceptional write-up on Jeffrey Boakye's online session during #BlackHistoryMonth earned her a well-deserved prize – a book by the author himself!

Her 100-word report not only showcased her talent but also perfectly met the criteria set for the task. This achievement is a testament to Sana's dedication and hard work in researching and crafting her piece.

Congratulations to Sana for this remarkable accomplishment!



Avanti Feel Good Field Trips project takes pupils on an educational adventure!

Pupils had the exciting opportunity to embark on a journey to Lancaster as part of the Avanti Feel Good Field Trips project.

The trip not only provided them with insights into train travel but also included a visit to the historic Lancaster Castle before heading to the Dukes Theatre.

At the theatre, pupils engaged in an interactive workshop before enjoying a captivating performance of "The Borrowers," which is this year's festive production at the Dukes Theatre.

It was an enriching experience that combined education and entertainment for all.



Meet the cast of our summer production of Annie!



We are thrilled to have announced the talented actresses and actors who will be gracing the stage in our upcoming summer production of Annie.

The cast are so excited to be part of this amazing journey, and they are ready to bring you a spectacular show that you won't forget.

Stay tuned for updates on rehearsals, behind-the-scenes sneak peeks, and more exciting news about what promises to be an unforgettable production of Annie.



Anti-Bullying Week with the Education Partnership Trust



Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors led the way in helping all the schools in the Education Partnership Trust (EPT) to produce an Anti-Bullying Charter during Anti-Bullying Week.

Our Year 10 pupils hosted the event which included Coal Clough Academy, The Heights Burnley, The Heights Blackburn, Eden School, Burnley High School and Atherton High School.

The theme of Anti-Bullying Week this year was 'Choose Respect.'

Year 11 Sophia was helping to oversee the event and said: "We have talked about respect and how important it is to see everyone's perspective."

"We have also discussed what people think bullying is and have come up with a charter which includes rules for parents, teachers and pupils."

Blackburn College hosts Remembrance Day

The Public Services department at Blackburn College organised a unique event aimed at providing Year 9 pupils with an exclusive insight into the roles and responsibilities of the Uniformed Services.



The day was filled with interactive activities led by organisations such as the Royal British Legion, Lancashire Constabulary, Armed Forces, and Royal Navy.

Pupils actively engaged in command tasks and received valuable training on administering first aid for medical injuries.

A touching tribute took place at 11am when both pupils and staff came together to honour fallen heroes. This act of remembrance was symbolised by the laying of a wreath on behalf of our school.

Year 9 Ramisha is a Ju-Jitsu gold medallist!

Ramisha has been attending the Masters of Martial Arts Academy in Blackburn for more than two years.

"My dad suggested it as he encouraged me to do self-defence and I found I actually enjoyed it."

Ramisha trains most days and also coaches and helps out at the club as well. She recently competed at the United Nations of Ju-Jitsu World Congress and Championships in Germany.

"It's the first time I have competed abroad. I enjoyed it. I took part in a number of events in different age and weight categories. There was Kata, a Pairs Demonstration, Random Attack, Ground Fighting, Continuous Fight and Sparring."

"There were six events and I won four golds, one silver and one bronze medal. I will move up a category from beginner to intermediate this month and I am currently taking my Orange Belt Green Stripe."

"I like it, it's fun, it's disciplined and I have made a lot of friends."



Year 11 Further Education Provider Event

Pupils have been planning life after Pleckgate at a Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance College Information Day. The school was packed with representatives talking about post-16 choices including information on colleges, sixth forms and apprenticeships.

Among those attending was: Blackburn College, Cardinal Newman College, Clitheroe Royal Grammar School Sixth Form, Myerscough College, Get Set Apprenticeships, Accrington and Rossendale College, Darwen Aldridge Community Academy, St Wilfrid's Sixth Form, Burnley College, Preston College, Training 2000 Apprenticeships and Westholme Sixth Form.

Providers talked to pupils about the wide variety of courses, application process, as well as examples of career opportunities.

Adam, Year 11 wants to go to Blackburn College to study Applied Science and either become a physiotherapist or a vet but he is still open to other opportunities.

"I enjoyed the event. I learnt about different apprenticeships and jobs, what qualifications you need and how to apply for them."

Communications and Careers Manager Mrs Faruki said: "It's been such a successful event. We pride ourselves at Pleckgate on giving our pupils as much information as they can to pursue their dreams. We want them to be aware of as many opportunities as possible which are open to them so they can make the best decisions."





#HelloYellow for World Mental Health Day!



Pupils and staff took part in a #HelloYellow Day for the charity Young Minds.

The charity asked people to wear yellow for World Mental Health Day. It's a vibrant colour and it's about 'shining brighter' and to signify that young people are not alone with their mental health.

Some members of staff made sure they certainly embraced the day by dressing in a yellow banana costume to share their top tips for well-being while pupils joined in the fun by wearing the costume too.

Pupils watched an assembly streamed by the Mental Health Support Team while our well-being champions went into tutor groups collecting donations for the Young Minds charity.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Learning Support Officer Ms Spence said: "We were joined by the Mental Health Support Team who offered drop-in sessions and provided face painting and yellow ribbons in line with the #HelloYellow theme."

Pupils celebrate National Poetry Day with Poet David Viney

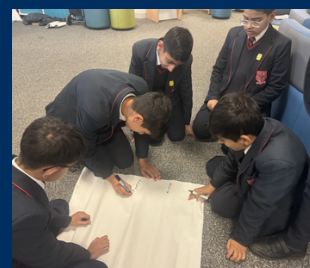
Pupils celebrated National Poetry Day with multiple poetry slam winner and esteemed workshop facilitator, David Viney, who led four engaging workshops under the theme 'Counting on each other'.

The sessions delved into unique ways of describing individuals by likening them to objects, man-made structures, or elements in nature. Pupils honed their skills in crafting rhyming couplets, employing alliteration techniques, and mastering impactful statement lines.

David said: "I was impressed by the pupil's ability to work fast-paced and their focus. They were fun in their creativity and honest with their feelings. They took a personal subject 'who they could count on' and they ran with it, sharing heartfelt sentiments in front of me and each other"

David Viney is renowned for his contributions to poetry nights and festivals across the UK. Through his workshops, he aims to make poetry accessible and enjoyable for all while demystifying the intricacies of writing and performing poetry.

Idrees, Year 7 said: "It was an awesome and unique event. I enjoyed learning about different types of poetry."



The BAE Systems Roadshow visit Year 7

The BAE Systems, Royal Navy and The Royal Air force roadshow team recently visited our school, providing an unforgettable experience for our pupils as they delved into the fascinating world of electricity.

Through a series of captivating demonstrations and interactive activities, the team effectively conveyed complex concepts in a fun and engaging manner.

Our pupils were visibly energised by the presentations, with many eager participants volunteering to take part in the experiments.

The roadshow not only sparked curiosity but also ignited a passion for science among the young minds present.



The Message Trust's 'No More County Lines' Tour visits Pleckgate



Our school had the privilege of hosting The Message Trust as they presented their 'No More County Lines' tour to our pupils.

Both pupils and staff were deeply impacted by the powerful lessons shared, focusing on effective strategies to tackle crime and promote safety.

Mrs. Savage, Head of RE, Worldviews, and PSHE, said: "It has been brilliant having the Message Trust in today for their 'No More County Lines Tour' in Blackburn."

"They delivered some hard-hitting messages through real life stories and also some phenomenal music from Nxt Chaptr. The session helped pupils feel equipped to speak up against and say no to crime."



Blackburn is Inspiring 2024



Year 11 pupils visited the annual Blackburn is Inspiring event at King George's Hall to support pupils in deciding on their next steps in education, employment or training.

The event hosted 68 exhibitors (including the University of Lancaster, Blackburn College, Lancashire Constabulary, Booths, Forbes Solicitors, Future U and Get Set Academy) and was attended by almost 2200 young people throughout the day.

Romaisa said: "I liked that there was a range of stalls that could give me multiple choices for my future. It really made me think of what I want to do after my GCSEs."

Mohammed-Murtaza said: "The event was a great opportunity for me to see the different options that are available to me."

Welcoming Year 7s to Pleckgate

Our Year 7s have given the thumbs up to their first half-term at Pleckgate.

Aamina said: "It was hard at first as I came from a small primary school. It was confusing and scary just by the size of the school but you soon realise everyone is in the same place and you stop feeling scared."

Rehyan said: "I enjoy the food, PE and the facilities. I have joined a few extra-curricular clubs such as the Fitness and Games Club. There is a lot of moving around to different lessons, but now I know my way and I am enjoying Pleckgate."

Arissa said: "It is different to primary school in that you move around to different classes but I have made a lot of new friends. I enjoy English and Maths and I like football as an extracurricular activity."

Adam said: "At first I found it confusing as it's a big building but I have found my way now. I like Geography best and enjoy playing sports like basketball, table tennis and football after school."

Dima added: "It's a really nice school and I feel at home now. I had heard such a lot about Pleckgate as my sister came here so I couldn't wait to start. There is always help around every corner and I feel really settled"



The Scholastic book fair

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIRS

The Scholastic book fair ran throughout November and December.

Pupils eagerly explored the books and stationery available, resulting in total sales of £442.40.

School Librarian, Mrs Hanson said: "The book fair offers a diverse selection of books that cater to various interests and reading levels, providing something for everyone to enjoy."

This success led to a reward of £176.96 for purchasing new library books selected by Mrs. Hanson for January's collection.

Medical Mavericks visit Pleckgate High School

Our pupils got to test their blood pressure, see if they have a steady hand for keyhole surgery and take (fake!) blood when Medical Mavericks came into school.

Medical Mavericks aim to inspire the next generation of medics and scientists by taking real medical and sports science equipment into schools. Science and Technology teacher Mr Ainsworth, who also is the STEM coordinator, oversaw the sessions for all year groups.

"Medical Mavericks help to raise awareness of the different careers in the NHS with workshops in school which pupils can have a go at."

"There is an ultrasound machine, an ECG machine, stethoscopes, testing blood pressure, goggles to test their eyes and also 'beer' goggles to look at how alcohol affects eyesight and balance as well as taking fake blood."

"There is also a machine where pupils can mimic keyhole surgery. It's really exciting for pupils to try out all these activities and can help them look at the different career paths they can take in medicine."



Year 9 Aaminah said: "I have had an ECG and everything is absolutely fine! It's been a good experience."

Raihan said: "I have done my blood pressure and measured my height. I have learned much more about medicine"

Daisy Leigh from Medical Mavericks said: "We host a lot of workshops to highlight careers in the NHS and show it's not just doctors and nurses. We also want to show that a lot of these careers are achievable for most pupils."



Our Annual Achievement Evening 2024



Dr Chris Hines MBE was a superb special guest at our Achievement Evening.

Chris has campaigned for the environment for more than 30 years and inspired positive change. He was given an MBE for services to the environment in 2008.

Chris, whose mother-in-law Judith Mallam, used to teach Maths at Pleckgate, spoke about his 'Surfers Against Sewage' campaign to the parents, pupils and the staff.

He explained how it started out as a small group of surfers campaigning for cleaner waters and they found a solution to stop raw sewage going straight into the sea and this was implemented in the UK.

"We have to create a better world and hopefully the Pleckgate pupils can help do that as everyone can do their bit. It has a ripple effect that someone in Blackburn making a positive change can help people across the world."

It was an inspirational talk and Chris then presented awards to the Class of 2024 – those who left in July – and also the current Year 8-11s.

Headteacher Mrs McGinty said: "We have decided to do something different this year in recognising the achievements of pupils in all year groups. This is in academic success as well as leadership, progress, success and more. It was such a rewarding occasion, we are so proud of all our pupils".



School Council Initiatives



Our School Council are busy coming up with ideas of how they can make Pleckgate even better.

The School Council is made up of two pupils from each year group, from Year 7-11, who are voted in by other pupils in school.

Shievean said: "We have been discussing ways of remembering our school experiences and I have made a suggestion of a leavers book. I would like it as it's something to remember everyone by and to remember life at school."

Aisha said: "My idea is a charity fundraiser and perhaps link it to our culture day. I think it would be a really good celebration in school"

Year 11 Netball success!



Our Year 11 netball team are sharpshooters after finishing third in the Blackburn with Darwen Schools League.

Captain Anam said: "We have been together since Year 8 and we have enjoyed playing netball. It's fun but we are competitive."

PE teacher Mrs Ryding said: "They have done really well in what is a difficult league. I am proud of them all."

Year 11 football championships

Rethwan proved four-midable as our Year 11s celebrated a 4-2 victory over big rivals Blackburn Central.

Blackburn Central raced into a two-goal lead. However, Pleckgate then woke up with an electrifying forward beating Central's defence twice with two clinical finishes to make it all-square at the break.

A rare defensive lapse from a corner saw Central pull a goal back to set up a nervy finish but a superb save from Pleckgate's Zak G helped to give his side a memorable win in the Year 11 Championship as supported by Blackburn Rovers Sports College.



Pleckgate Partners with Blackburn Rovers

We have teamed up with Blackburn Rovers as part of their Premier League Kicks Programme. Blackburn Rovers Community Trust runs free to attend coaching sessions aimed at participants of all abilities.

Their coaches will hold sessions at Pleckgate for Year 10/11 Boys on Tuesdays from 3.15-4.15pm and, for girls of all years, the sessions are on Friday from 3.15-4.15pm.

As well as the coaching sessions, Pleckgate pupils will have the chance to represent Blackburn Rovers Community Trust in tournaments, fixtures and trips.

To sign up, pupils need to meet at the canteen on the day and time of the sessions or see the PE Department for further information.