



The Pleckgate High School Newsletter

July 2024



We have been rated Outstanding!

After an Ofsted inspection in June, we were judged outstanding in every category - the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management.

Our overall effectiveness as a school was confirmed by Ofsted as being 'outstanding' and it's a huge thank you to our absolutely brilliant pupils, talented teachers and support staff and our superb governors.

Staff have worked diligently since our last inspection to ensure that children receive an excellent education alongside a wide range of opportunities and experiences to support them in becoming successful, confident and articulate young people.

Our pupils' academic achievements afford them a wide range of choices about their future pathways.

We are delighted that so many of them regularly visit us and talk positively about their school experience.

Support over the holidays

During our latest 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

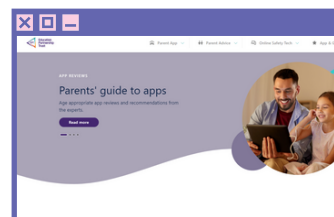
The last week of this term also coincides with the launch of our new Online Safety Hub: www.educationpartnershiptrust.onlinesafetyhub.uk

The Online Safety Hub 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.

This is a brand-new online resource with lots of expert advice and guidance to help you manage your child's safety online as a parent.

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.



Mrs Millest awarded a Bronze Winner at the Pearson National Teaching Awards



Head of Year 7, Mrs Millest has been awarded the status of Bronze Winner at the prestigious 2024 Pearson National Teaching Awards and has been described as 'one in a million' by her colleagues.

Mrs Millest was nominated for her long service and dedication to Pleckgate in the Lifetime Achievement category.

Mrs Millest has worked at Pleckgate for 35 years, initially as a music teacher and then Head of Music.

A statement from the Pearson National Teaching Awards stated: "This year, the exceptional quality of entries from educational settings across the UK posed a significant challenge for our judges in shortlisting finalists.

"Although Mrs Millest did not advance to the final judging stage in the Lifetime Achievement category she has been awarded the status of Bronze Winner."



Learning Pastoral Support Officer, Mrs Patel was nominated in the Unsung Hero category but didn't make the final shortlist. She is described as an 'absolute star' by her colleagues.

Her nomination said: "Mrs Patel has extremely good relationships with not only the pupils at Pleckgate High School, but also their families and any agencies that may be working with them."

"She has supported a number of less experienced staff and this has had a huge impact on these members of staff and the pupils in their care. She is exceptionally well prepared, organised and conscientious. She is an absolute star."

Mrs Millest will receive a certificate, a personal letter from Pearson President, Michael Morpurgo, and a Bronze Winner lapel pin.



An adventure with PGL

Pupils embarked on an exhilarating school trip to PGL Winmarleigh Hall, an adventure activity centre located in the heart of Lancashire.

The three-day excursion was packed with thrilling activities, team-building exercises, and memorable experiences that will be cherished by the pupils for years to come.

Trip highlights included Jacob's Ladder, where pupils showed determination and teamwork. Raft building promoted creativity and problem-solving skills.

The giant swing offered an exhilarating experience, pushing pupils out of their comfort zones.

Activities like archery tag, climbing, and team challenges were organised to enhance communication and leadership skills. The tasks aimed to push pupils' boundaries, boost confidence, and foster stronger bonds among participants.



Eco Club wins the Green Flag with Distinction Award!

Our Eco Club are celebrating after achieving the Green Flag with Distinction Award in 2024.

The hard work of the Eco Club was recognised by Eco Schools in 2022, when the school received the Green Flag Award, then in 2023 Pleckgate progressed to the Green Flag Award with Merit before this recent top success.

The Eco Club have worked hard this year, planting trees with Lancashire County Council, organising a Meat Free Monday's trial, attending the North West Sustainability Conference for the third time and also shared their work on a stall.

The Eco Club created recycled centrepiece sculptures for the Community CVS in Partnership with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's annual Community Volunteer Awards in King George's Hall in November 2023.

Eco Schools commented: "It's wonderful that Pleckgate have appointed such a large and representative Eco-Committee, this shows the school's excellent commitment to both the programme and the eco-cause. It was great to see that Pleckgate had such a group of eager, enthusiastic volunteers."

Mrs Banks, geography teacher said: "I am incredibly proud of the Eco Club for their dedication and passion. I am very pleased that the pupils' hard work has been recognised at the highest level through the Eco Schools Awards this year."



Pleckgate in Paris!



Our pupils are back from spending four days in the capital of France. Pupils enjoyed a French breakfast consisting of croissants and pain au chocolat and then climbed to the summit of the Eiffel Tower (776 stairs!). They visited the pyramid of The Louvre where the Mona Lisa is located and strolled through the Tuileries Gardens.

Pupils also explored Montmartre, a charming neighbourhood filled with artists, did some shopping and then visited the Sacré-Cœur Basilica atop a hill.

Later that day, they toured Le Château de Versailles to see Louis XIV's palace and learned about French kings, monarchy and Bastille Day.

Finally, during their return journey, they made a stop at a Chocolaterie where pupils observed how French chocolates are made - Miam Miam!

Author Imran Ahmad visits Pleckgate

Pupils were invited to an audience with Imran Ahmad, the author of 'The Perfect Gentleman.'

This memoir has touched the heart of readers and has received a list of endorsements from all quarters across the political, religious, ethnic and cultural spectrums.

Imran spent the morning discussing his journey and reading excerpts from his book.

This was followed by some smaller group workshops and the opportunity to delve further into his messages and gain some valuable insights.





Pleckgate pupils left the audience wanting more after their performance of Oliver!

The school put on a lavish Oliver! production after well-attended rehearsals and the pupils went to Leeds Playhouse to watch a production, which it based on the Charles Dicken's novel, to gain some tips.

Pleckgate sold out their shows last week and also put on a performance for primary school pupils.

English teacher Miss Bland was the Show Director, organising a superb backdrop to add to the atmosphere, and she said: "Everyone put in so much effort and dedication."

"I am proud of everyone who played a part whether they performed, helped backstage or came to support our cast. It was brilliant and the pupils got a lot out of it in terms of skills and confidence."

TeenTech Festival



Our pupils had the privilege of participating in the TeenTech Festival held at UCLAN.

The event highlighted potential career paths in STEM fields through presentations and interactive tasks.

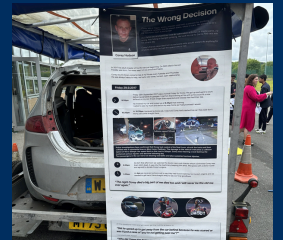
Pupils engaged in activities such as ultrasound medicine, virtual reality veterinary surgery, cybercrime solving, and marketing a fashion product app.

They also created their own innovative products aimed at enhancing the well-being of individuals.

Wasted Lives session

Lancashire Fire and Rescue came into Pleckgate to deliver their Wasted Lives session to our pupils.

The sessions explored attitudes and behaviours to road safety focusing on the consequences of taking risks in a car as a passenger as well as a driver.



The session explored Lancashire's 'fatal five', which includes: drink and drug driving, speeding, mobile phone use, seatbelts and distractions.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue also brought in an example of a car that had been involved in a crash so pupils could see first-hand the devastating effects of dangerous driving.



Key Stage 4 visit STORY Contracting

Pupils got the opportunity to make a careers trip to STORY Contracting.

The pupils were chosen after they applied for a place and submitted an expression of interest in the company, which provides award-winning civil engineering solutions.

They learned about different career paths, spoke with graduate engineers and a graduate Quantity Surveyor. They were introduced to the different divisions at STORY, including rail and construction.



Miss Faruki, Careers Lead, said: "This is part of our pupils' Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) education. These visits are valuable and worthwhile. This trip was especially insightful for pupils who hope for a career in civil engineering in the future."



Tree planting with Lancashire County Council

Our Eco Club was tree-mendous after attending Lancashire County Council's Tree Planting event on Woolridge Playing Fields.

It was part of the Eco Club's continuing work to raise awareness about the environment and take positive steps to look after the local community.

Geography teacher Mrs Banks, who leads the Eco Club, said: "It was a real privilege for our pupils to work alongside Lancashire County Council and make a long-lasting impact on their local environment."

"Pupils had a wonderful opportunity to plant a range of tree species which will offer a much-needed calming area to reconnect with nature and space for wildlife to flourish. This experience has enhanced the Eco Club's planting skills and understanding of the environment around them. It is lovely to know the Eco Club's conservation contribution today will extend for many years."



Lancashire CC's Community Engagement Officer for Treescapes Jenni Butler said: "We are very grateful to the students and teachers that helped us on the day, they did a fantastic job of planting the huge trees!"

Pleckgate's Sufiyaan Salam wins Stormzy's #Merky Books prize

A former Pleckgate pupil has won popstar Stormzy's Merky Books New Writers' Prize.

Sufiyaan Salam is now 26 but left Pleckgate 10 years ago and graduated in English Literature from the University of Manchester.

Sufiyaan's book is called 'Wimmy Road Boyz' and follows three men in pursuit of a wild time in Manchester. They don't know that their first night out in so long will be their last. Sufiyaan's debut novel explores 'heartbreak, masculinity, friendship, faith and class'.



Chart-topping musician Stormzy set up the #Merky Books prize to discover unpublished and under-represented writers aged 16 to 30 from the UK and Ireland.

Sufiyaan has won a publishing contract with Stormzy's publishing imprint Merky Books at Penguin Random House UK.

Sufiyaan said: "It's still sinking in, but I'm beyond excited to be given the opportunity to have my work published with Penguin. I've been trying to write for as long as I can remember and I'm committed to making work that's interesting, has something to say and is even better fun."

Stormzy said: "I was excited to announce Sufiyaan as this year's winner of the prize. I loved Wimmy Road Boyz and I can't wait to read more."

Class of 2024 – Look to Future

Our Year 11 pupils have high ambitions, from doctors, to accountants to network engineers. After completing their GCSEs, a number of them spoke about their next steps.

Fatima said: "I want to go to Cardinal Newman College and study A-Levels in Business, Economics and Accounting as well as AS Core Level Maths."

Fatima wants to be the first doctor in her family. "I want to go to St Wilfrid's and study A-Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Psychology. I just love science, I find it interesting. I want to go into medicine and be an eye specialist, it's fascinating."



Awaan is looking for an Apprenticeship as a Network Engineer. "I didn't know what I wanted to do at school and then I took GCSE Computing and I really enjoyed it. I am looking at IT roles and I am currently applying for Apprenticeships as I feel this would be better for me than college."

Mubeen has some decisions to make once he gains his final grades in August. "I will either go to St Wilfrid's Sixth Form or Cardinal Newman College and study Maths, Further Maths, Chemistry and either Biology or Physics."



Blue Planet Aquarium trip

A group of our pupils went on a Science trip to the Blue Planet Aquarium.

Their trip centred around topics including biodiversity, pollution and extinction, mainly on marine wildlife.

The pupils engaged with an educational session led by a marine biologist about the endangerment of sharks and how humans affect the biodiversity of specific marine species.

The live talk which included a shark talk, stingray and fish feed were among the favourite parts of the pupils' experience.



CyberFirst Mega Festival



Thirty of our talented pupils participated alongside more than 550 girls from various locations in the North West at Blackpool and the Flyde College for a motivating CyberFirst MEGA Event.

The objective was to spark an interest in STEM fields among girls by highlighting the thrilling prospects in technology and cybersecurity roles.

The event was highly successful as our pupils engaged in hands-on sessions with professionals from IBM, KPMG, Cumbria Police, and BEC, acquiring priceless knowledge about the world of cybersecurity and technology.

Anne Frank Trust

Pupils discussed prejudice and discrimination with a visit from the Anne Frank Trust.

Pleckgate became a prestigious Anne Frank Trust Link School last year, promoting a society safe from prejudice and discrimination and they work closely with the Trust to do this.

Selected pupils had a two-day visit from the Trust who talked about Anne Frank's life on the first day and then a workshop on the second day. The pupils can then decide if they want to apply to be Anne Frank Ambassadors.

Sam Winnard, from the Anne Frank Trust, said: "We have spent two days with the pupils at Pleckgate, all about challenging prejudice. The pupils are great, their views are so mature and it's been lovely to hear from them."

Head of Religion and World Views Mrs Savage said: "We have worked with the Anne Frank Trust UK for a number of years and the work they do with young people is phenomenal. Our pupils have been inspired to be a voice against all forms of prejudice and discrimination and we were delighted that Michael Josephson MBE was able to join us to hear the presentations from our pupils."



A Day of Inspiration and Creativity with Authors SF Said and Lily Bailey

A group of pupils had the privilege to participate in a virtual session with renowned author SF Said, known for his work "Tyger."

During the Zoom talk, Said delved into the depths of his book, sharing insights and anecdotes while graciously fielding questions from the eager audience.

Following the session, the pupils were introduced to Lily Bailey, the talented author behind "When I See Blue." Bailey shared her personal journey and how her experiences with OCD as a child inspired her writing. She recounted her coping mechanisms through therapy sessions and left a lasting impact on all those present.

The highlight was when Lily signed copies of her book and took memorable photos with each pupil.

The pupils gained valuable insights into the creative process of authors – from initial ideas to published works that can take years to come to fruition. It was an event that not only broadened their horizons but also ignited their passion for literature and storytelling.





CyberFirst Silver Award

We are thrilled to announce that Pleckgate High School has officially been accredited by the National Cyber Security Centre (part of GCHQ) as a CyberFirst School, receiving the prestigious Silver award.

This recognition signifies our commitment to providing high standards in cyber security education.

By integrating cyber security into our curriculum, we aim to equip our pupils with vital skills in areas such as cyber security, cryptography, and network security, preparing them for successful careers in this field.

Furthermore, we are proud to have KPMG on board as an industry partner who will support us in further enhancing our cyber security program.



Great success at cooking club



The cooking club ran for a few months during the final part of the year.

Pupils attended regularly and made a variety of dishes including cheese and onion pasties, Mexican pockets, apple crumble, flapjack, muffins, calzone pizza and Viennese fingers.

Pupils were great and thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and have been making the dishes at home.

Training 2000 success



Key Stage 4, Eesa has been awarded a prize by Training 2000 for his 'outstanding performance' and has been praised as a 'fantastic asset to our school.'

Eesa has a passion for engineering and used his initiative to sign up for an engineering course with Training 2000 after school, after attending career trips organised by school.

He has been actively participating in the course, conducting his own research and demonstrating a strong interest in an engineering career. He showcased his skills by creating a metal dice and a keyring using machinery and tools typical of an engineer.

For this, Training 2000 awarded him their outstanding prize and praised his enthusiasm and talent.

Eesa said: "I want to pursue a career in engineering and have received a lot of support and encouragement from school to do this."

The Young Enterprise team took part in the Lancashire and Cumbria showcase!



The Young Enterprise team took part in the Lancashire and Cumbria showcase at Lancaster University Management School which included setting up their stall, being interviewed by a panel of judges and presenting their business idea.

Mrs Coulthard, Head of Computer Science said: "This is the first year that we have run Young Enterprise at Pleckgate High School and they have done a tremendous job getting their business idea up and running."

Measuring Waves



Pupils visited the Young Scientist Centre at UCLAN where they took part in a Measuring Waves workshop.

The activities formed part of their GCSE Required Practical work and pupils were fortunate to have the opportunity to use the state-of-the-art equipment at the university to carry out their investigations.

Pupils measured the frequency, wavelength and wave speed of waves in water (using the Ripple Tank) and in a solid using the standing wave generator.



GCSE trip to The Lowry

Our talented GCSE pupils visited The Lowry.

Pauline, a resident artist, guided them through the gallery's Lowry collection and led discussions on interpreting L.S. Lowry's work. Pupils sketched exaggerated features in Lowry-style portraits before creating mixed-media self-portraits in a workshop.

Pauline commended on the pupils' work quality and engagement. Our pupils represented Pleckgate impressively during this visit to The Lowry.



A trip to Malham Cove



Almost one hundred geography pupils visited Malham in the Yorkshire Dales National Park to undertake some field work as part of their GCSE.

The trip supported learning from the classroom on National Parks, the formation of limestone and karst scenery and changing cities.

Pupils also took part in an interesting tour of White Scar Caves in Ingleton to view limestone formations in Europe's largest showcave.

Pupils were tasked with investigating the evidence of and impacts of tourism and collected several pieces of primary data.

Our fantastic extra-curricular opportunities in music

Our music department offers a fantastic extra-curricular opportunity in partnership with Bolton Music Service.

These sessions are free and are instrumental lessons which take place each week for 20 minutes during the school day in lesson time. Piano lessons are on Monday while drum, guitar and vocal lessons are all on Thursday.

Miss Jones, Head of Music said: "Pupils are entitled to one free lesson in music per week. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils and will help increase their musical skill. Learning an instrument is linked to increased self-discipline, concentration and social skills."

Bilal, Year 8 said: "I have been having guitar lessons since September and I am really enjoying them. It's great to learn new pieces and I look forward to it each week."



Construction course at Blackburn College



MohmedZaid in Year 10 finished his first year of a Construction course at Blackburn College.

As part of his studies, he successfully completed a joinery module.

Utilising his newfound joinery skills, he designed and crafted a beautiful Quran stand as a thoughtful gift.

A visit to Canalside in Blackburn



Pupils were specially selected to take part in an Outdoor Adventure Day down at Canalside in Blackburn.

Pupils took part in activities ranging from canoeing and archery to team building and orienteering, to complete the tasks ahead of them.

Throughout the day pupils were able to develop their communication and team building skills as they had to work together in order to complete the tasks ahead of them.



The Scholastic Book fair

Our annual Scholastic book fair ran from April 24th to May 14th.

Pupils eagerly explored the books and stationery available, resulting in total sales of £482.15.

This success led to a reward of £192.86 for purchasing new library books selected by Mrs. Hanson for September's collection.



A visit to Williamson Park



Pupils enjoyed a day with nature at Williamson Park in Lancaster. Pupils toured the Butterfly House, the mini zoo and hunted insects which live among the flora and fauna.

The Butterfly House is home to exotic butterflies, fish, tortoise, terrapins and an array of weird and wonderful plants.

Pupils were given a talk from the staff about the life cycle of butterflies from their days as a caterpillar to the metamorphosis into a beautiful butterfly.

The guide explained some of the pack behaviour and how it helps the animals to survive in the wild.

The group then became intrepid explorers outdoors and competed against each other as to who could find the creepiest crawlies.

STEMPower

Pupils had the chance to explore the impact of STEM at the Blackburn College's STEMPOWER event.

They engaged in a computer assembly competition and connected with STEM graduates currently employed in various fields.



Ribble Valley schools hold second annual COP-style climate crisis conference

Ribble Valley's commitment to tackling climate change took centre stage as dozens of young people from across Lancashire attended the second pupils' climate conference. Held at Ribblesdale High School, the event was a powerful reminder that when it comes to tackling climate change 'Every Action Counts'.

The conference – known as 'CORVS 2' which stands for 'Council of Ribble Valley Schools' – kicked off with an inspiring opening address from Ribble Valley Mayor, Councillor Louise Edge.

Keynote speaker Francis Hyland, a renowned author from the Eco Schools Project, then captivated the audience with a thought-provoking presentation on how small changes in schools can make a big difference.

Pupils engaged in hands-on workshops, including invertebrate sampling to monitor river water quality, building bird boxes, and crafting meat-free menus for school dinners.

David Rawkins, organiser of CORVS 2, said: "While the COP conference unites world leaders, it's crucial to drive change locally too. This pupil conference hopes to inspire a wave of other local initiatives that, together, can drive significant global impact."



Year 9 pupils win the Magistrates Mock Trial!

Year 9 pupils represented Pleckgate High School competing in the Magistrates Mock Trial in March 2024 at the North West Regional Heat. Pupils defended and prosecuted cases against other schools including Tauheedul Islamic Girls' School, Broughton and Hodgson High Schools.

Pupils were able to secure a 'conviction' when they were prosecuting and an 'acquittal' when they were defending. Pupils represented solicitors, legal advisors, witnesses and members of the court as they put forward convincing arguments for both sides of the case.

Pleckgate pupils were successful in being crowned as winners of the North West Regional Heat and are pictured here with Judge Andrew Jefferies KC and Judge Sarah Dodd.





Sports round up

Congratulations to all the pupils who participated in this summer's sports programme.

Despite the challenging weather conditions, our dedicated pupils attended numerous practices and proudly represented the school, making the PE team extremely proud.

We witnessed outstanding performances in rounders and cricket, with 65 students representing us in athletics at town sports.

Additionally, badminton, basketball, football, and table tennis activities continued throughout the summer. A big well done to everyone involved!



A visit to Brockholes

The Eco Club had the opportunity to visit Brockholes Nature Reserve.

The pupils went on the Eco reward trip for being the hardest working contributors this year!

They explored the discovery trail and identified a number of birds such as a Common Chiffchaff and a Reed Warbler



Inter-tutor rounders competition

Pupils took part in an inter-tutor rounders competition.

Due to the heavy rain the pupils played in the Sports Hall but despite the weather the pupils put on an excellent performance.

Congratulations to 8HMI and 8NAH who were the joint winners. They won 11.5 to 10.5 in a very close game.

The star players (nominated by the teachers and sports coaches) were; Isla, Halima, Aliza and Aysha.



EMELBI digital portrait workshop



Our GCSE Art pupils loved the EMELBI digital portrait workshop day. Pupils were engaged throughout the whole day and produced some fantastic digital self-portraits!

Lancaster University's Advanced Mathematics Support Programme

Pupils talked about Maths and the careers which the subject could offer with Lancaster University's Advanced Mathematics Support Programme.

Pupils who are taking Maths, and some who are also taking Further Maths at Pleckgate, took part in a talk and a workshop which looked at the opportunities opened up by taking A-Level Maths.

Abdurrahman said: "It was interesting, I realised how beneficial having a maths A-Level is and it is something I will take."



Sophia said: "I now know that taking Maths won't just lead me down one path, there are a lot more careers which you can go into with a maths A-Level."

Hamzah said: "There are a lot of different options if you take A-Level maths."

A trip to Whalley Cricket Club



Pupils had the opportunity to visit Whalley Cricket Club.

Fielding drills on the outfield were followed by batting and bowling practice on the astroturf nets.

The school team's conduct impressed the First XI captain, who commended pupils on their teamwork and manners!