



ASHINGTON
Academy

NEWSLETTER

DEC
2023



WINTER

A message from our headteacher...



As 2023 draws to a close, it is a pleasure to write to you at the end of my first half term as Head of School at Ashington Academy. I am privileged to join the school at this exciting point in its journey and feel very proud to lead our wonderful students, staff and wider community in our next chapter.

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on an incredibly successful year. We are delighted to have been recognised as the best performing secondary school in both Northumberland, and the north region, for progress in the 2023 GCSE examinations; this is an achievement that also places us in the top 5% of schools nationally.

This incredible success reflects the hard work of our students and their determination to achieve excellence. We proudly celebrated the many achievements of our students at Ashington Academy's Awards Ceremony and we continue to recognise their many and varied successes.

We've welcomed Frantic Assembly - a leading UK theatre company - into school to run workshops with students; we have worked with businesses and organisations such as PwC, Visuna and ORE Catapult to highlight the range of careers opportunities open to our students and we have listened carefully to Northumberland Fire and Rescue Services as they worked with us to raise awareness of fire safety in the run up to Bonfire Night.

As per our annual tradition, we thoroughly enjoyed our 12 Days of Christmas celebrations including a delicious Christmas dinner and our Christmas discos to help us enjoy the festive season. We have also been pleased to spread a little Christmas cheer in the local community by inviting local residents into school for a festive afternoon tea and by supporting our local Food Bank with donations.

I would like to thank parents and carers for your support this term, and I look forward to seeing what our students go on to achieve in 2024.

Wishing you all a safe and restful Christmas break.

D Hudson

Debra Hudson, Head of School

In this issue...



12 Days of Christmas

Students and staff got into the festive spirit in the lead up to Christmas!



School recognition

This term our school was recognised as holding the top spot for progress in Northumberland!



Children in Need

Once again we raised funds for the brilliant cause in November.



Green Careers Week

This week our students learned about careers that focus on caring for the environment and sustainability.



Did you know?

In Germany, every year on the evening of the 5th December, German children leave a boot or a shoe outside their bedroom door.

When they wake up, if they've been good, they'll find their shoe filled with sweets! If not, they'll open their door to find a branch...

In Columbia, Little Candles' Day, or Día de las Velitas, marks the start of the Christmas season. Locals across the country place candles and paper lanterns on show in their windows, balconies and front yards and over the years, the tradition has evolved and now entire towns and cities are lit up around this time of year.

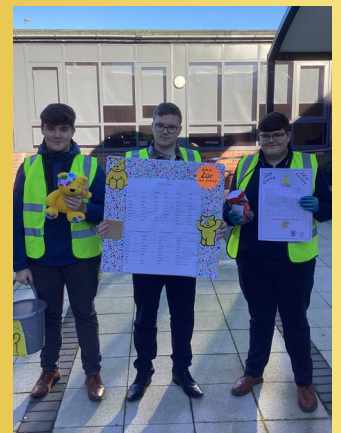


Children in Need

We had a wonderful day fundraising for Children in Need recently, raising a brilliant £222.93 for the charity!

Students and staff enjoyed our incredibly popular Bake Sale at break time, as well as 'Name the Bear', 'Guess the number of sweets in the jar' and 'Guess the teacher' quiz, learning all sorts of interesting facts about our staff!

A huge thank you to everybody who contributed.



Ashington is top!

We were absolutely delighted to see our school recognised as holding the top spot for progress in Northumberland this year, which is an absolute testament to the incredible hard work and efforts of our students and staff!

Not only is our school top performing in this measure in Northumberland, but we also hold the number one spot for progress in the North region, as well as being in the top 5% of schools nationally!

We are so proud of all our students and staff, and very grateful for the support we receive from parents and carers, and the wider community. The future is bright and we cannot wait to see what our brilliant students will achieve next!



Green Careers Week

As part of Green Careers Week in November, a group of Year 8 students had the brilliant opportunity to visit ORE Catapult in Blyth, the UK's leading Technology, Innovation and Research Centre for Offshore Renewable Energy.

The students enjoyed their presentation from Tom Chaplin all about renewable energy and the exciting local Dogger Bank project. Our students also took part in a fascinating group challenge to find the most suitable location to install wind turbines out at sea. The students showed great teamwork and negotiation skills during the challenge resulting in some excellent choices made by everyone!

During the week we were also very excited to be joined by Visuna, an Energy and Tech recruitment firm, for an assembly with Year 9 students which focused on the importance of pursuing a 'green' career and the available roles, salaries and skills required for such a position!

Following the assembly, a group of students were able to participate in a session on career opportunities that focussed on sustainability. Leaders at Visuna were so impressed by students at Ashington Academy and the results of a survey they carried out with them, that their visit has hit the press!



Macmillan fundraiser

This term we hosted our annual Macmillan cake sale once again.

Thank you to everyone who donated and bought any of the bakes, participated in the tombola and took part in the 'guess the number of Colin the caterpillar faces' competition. We raised a brilliant £315.59 for Macmillan Cancer Support! Shoutout to our sixth form students and Mrs Hume for organising the morning.



Spook-tacular!

This term our Key Stage 3 students enjoyed a spooktacular Halloween Celebration!

The group took part in games, trick or treat activities and received awards for their achievements during the first half term.

Students in 7KBR and 8HBA were celebrated for being the winning tutor groups in the homework race and students in 7WMC were rewarded for their improvements in behaviour, attendance and extra curricular involvement! Thirty of the students were also nominated as Ashington All Stars for their excellent attitude to learning and positivity around our school.



Christmas careers

Lets take a look at two careers that really come into their own during the winter months...

Ski Instructor

It's certainly a white Christmas when you work in the mountains during the winter months. Working abroad is a fantastic way to broaden knowledge of different cultures, languages and make friends. You'll need a BASI (British Association of Ski Instructors) Level 2 or 3 to get started as an instructor.

Events Manager

December is the busiest time for events planners. The role can earn you up to £45,000 per year and usually you'll need an undergraduate degree in events management or any other planning subject. The role is very varied as you could be juggling small get togethers while organising events for thousands of attendees.

Seeing stars

Our Year 13 art students and Year 12 photography students recently had a stellar time working with our friends from Kielder Observatory in the pop-up planetarium, practising their astrophotography skills!

Check out their incredible efforts from the pop up planetarium below.

Our students took the opportunity to explore the wonders of the night sky in a hands-on workshop and they are very much looking forwards to visiting Kielder to put these skills into practice in a dark sky location!



DATES

FOR YOUR DIARY

21 DEC - Break up for Christmas

08 JAN - Back to school

16 FEB - Break up for half term

26 FEB - Back to school

28 MAR - Break up for Easter



Inspiration from an author

This term a group of students from across all year groups had the amazing opportunity to take part in a workshop with visiting author Yvonne Battle-Felton as part of The Rural Young Creatives project, delivered by Highlights Rural Touring Scheme.

During the workshop, our students were inspired by exploring a number of creative writing tasks, including writing their own 26 word poem using each letter of the alphabet and writing a 'story smash' where they combined two of their favourite stories into one.

The workshop culminated with students writing a short story about a place they knew well or would like to go to, and incorporating themselves into the scenario, whilst changing a characteristic about themselves. Students shared their writing and received excellent feedback from Yvonne!



Bee-ology is back!



Our Bee-ology club have been hard at work once again!

Students have made a fantastic start to the garden this year and one of their first jobs was to set up a new hedgehog house by using reclaimed wood from the pallets that the paper we use in school is delivered in! The group also added two layers to our bug hotel and got some all-important weeding completed.

At the beginning of September, the club spotted bees covered in pollen, evidently enjoying the blooms in our garden, and were delighted to receive a donation of some wildflower seed bombs from Mini Meadows! We are so grateful for the continued support of the Ashington community in growing our garden.



The 12 Days of Christmas

In the lead up to Christmas, things got festive here at Ashington Academy!

We celebrated the 12 Days of Christmas with a jam packed timetable of activities to get staff and students into the Christmas spirit.

It kicked off brilliantly with a group of Year 7 students decorating our Christmas tree with their own handmade baubles! Students were nominated by their tutors for an excellent first term and thoroughly enjoyed the chance to get creative!

Not only that but we took part in a 'dec the doors' competition, a movie night and Christmas crafts to name just a few of our exciting activities. Of course, Christmas is a time to give back to the community so we also collected for our local foodbank and raised money for charity during our Christmas Jumper Day.

A big thank you to everyone who got involved and donated.



Fab football

Our Year 10 football team have gone from strength to strength this term.

After a fantastic start to the season, the group won 4-1 in a match against Dukes recently, placing them top of the league - well done. Don't forget, we offer a number of football clubs throughout the week as part of our extra-curricular programme, including: Year 7 and Year 8 football league, Year 9, 10 and 11 Boys' Football Club and Girls' Football Club.

