

## HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

We are somehow already surrounded by a feeling of festive cheer, with the Christmas Indoor Market this weekend offering us all the opportunity for some (early/last minute - delete as appropriate!) Christmas shopping from a wide range of purveyors of arts, crafts, food, gifts and services that will brighten our lives. I am hugely grateful to the YSA and all parents, colleagues and pupils who will offer their time to the smooth running of this lovely event. We are also looking forward to the Christmas Community Concert, with tickets now on sale and I look forward to seeing many of you there at this wonderful event: details within.

One pupil who will not be having a normal Christmas is Ava, whose article below explains her dad's extraordinary adventure, starting soon, to cross the Atlantic in a rowing boat which means he will be rowing right through Christmas in the middle of the ocean! We all wish Dean and all of 'Team Graft' the very best of luck, and look forward to welcoming him to school next year to hear about the experience.

There are multiple reminders in the newsletter of our pupils' ambition, community-mindedness, creativity

and success. Too many to mention all of them, but I must commend our CCF Cadets for their outstanding contribution to Yarm's Remembrance Parade last weekend, and the whole school for their participation in our moving Remembrance Service on Monday. The Community Action Group continue to make a difference through their good works, as explained below. Reports on Jesse's art success, our students' Maths awards, an extended artists' corner, debates in the medical/dental society and History Society dinner and much more besides all offer the chance to experience our pupils' busy lives vicariously through the newsletter!

I have enjoyed hearing from pupils in assemblies this week, with a fascinating presentation from the Lower Sixth on habits - good and bad - and how to shape these for the better, and one from some First Year pupils on anti-bullying week, respect and kindness. Our Upper Sixth Theatre Studies students performed their devised pieces this week in the Studio Theatre and I enjoyed this experience immensely - what talent! We look forward to the Fifth Year Play, Journey's End, next week, and I would encourage all to consider getting your tickets for an unforgettable evening of theatre (link within).

Dr H Williams



**It's Tomorrow!**

Yarm School Association presents:

# CHRISTMAS INDOOR MARKET

SAT 16TH NOV, 10AM - 4PM, YARM SCHOOL

ADULTS £4, CHILDREN FREE, PAY ON THE DOOR

Santa's Grotto • Rudolph Rodeo • Children's Games  
Food & Drinks • Craft Stalls • Unique Gifts

## YARM SCHOOL CCF REMEMBRANCE PARADE

On Sunday, 10th November, Yarm School's cadets took a place of honour, leading the town's Remembrance Parade down the high street to the war memorial. In a deeply respectful service, the parade paid tribute to the 74 local men commemorated for their sacrifices in the two World Wars and the Korean War. The turnout from the community was impressive, reflecting the shared pride and respect for those who served.

The cadets were led by Lieutenant Adam Bridges, with Warrant Officer Class 2 Graham Mist marshalling the procession and Lieutenant Dan Spence bringing up the rear. Colour Sergeant Grace Harbinson carried the CCF standard with pride, while Sergeant Daniel Townsend laid a wreath in memory of the fallen. It was a day of solemnity and reflection, and Yarm School and the CCF could not have been prouder of the commitment shown by all involved.

Cpt T Taylor



## FIFTH YEAR GEOGRAPHY RIVER WALK

During Fifth Year Geography lessons last week each of the three classes went on a walk around the River Tees that meanders around Yarm. We were looking for any flood management techniques that we could spot; put in place to mitigate the impact of flooding in Yarm. We saw lots of flood management techniques including the thirty two

flood gates which are currently being updated by the Environment Agency with work expected to be completed by 2025. This experience solidified our knowledge of the River Tees case study, which will be very beneficial for our IGCSE Geography course.

Theo Parker, Fifth Year



## GARDENS AND LIBRARIES!

Cicero reportedly said that 'If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need'. With this in mind, this half term pupils in the Community Action Group have volunteered to help cheer up a corner of the Yarm Wellness Centre garden. With a cream brick wall as their canvas, the students have designed, drawn and started to paint three separate murals based on the theme of nature. They will finish these over the course of the next few weeks, as well as decorating spring planters to adorn the quiet space at the rear of the centre.

And the libraries? Well, plans are well underway to complete the latest shipment of books for 'Just Be a Child', a charity who fill containers with second hand books, ship them to

Africa and then convert the containers into community libraries. Thank you to everyone who supported the Community Action Group's recent book collection. Particular thanks should go to the Prep School pupils who donated an amazing number for younger children!

Ms H Blakemore



## NEXT WEEK IS UK PARLIAMENT WEEK

We may embrace or hide from the coverage of elections, but it is vital that we all understand the workings of the UK Parliament. Let's pause for a moment and see how easily or comfortably we might answer the following arguably simple questions...

- What is parliament?
- What is the difference between parliament and government?
- How is the government formed?
- What powers does the House of Commons have?

- What powers does the House of Lords have?
- And what powers does the monarch have?
- How is a law actually made?

If you find yourself fumbling or murmuring your responses to those it may be a good idea to tune in to UK Parliament Week next week. Organised by the students in the Politics Department we will be having a number of assemblies, at the Prep and Senior School, some fun quizzes, debates, library wall and book



displays, and the release of helpful factsheets and videos. It is all a bid to make us that little bit more politically literate, and then maybe we can return to those questions above and see if we have improved at all!

Mr S Edwards

## GERMAN PARTNER SCHOOL VISIT TO WERTHER, GERMANY

During the half term break, myself and five other GCSE and A Level students, along with Mr Fellows and Mrs Gray, travelled to our partner school in Germany; 'Evangelisches Gymnasium Werther'. Although our connection with this school has spanned many years, it has been almost a decade since we last visited.

Following the surprisingly smooth overnight ferry to Rotterdam, we enjoyed two days connecting with our

new-found German friends, attending lessons and break times with them, as well as experiencing a number of culture shocks - such as their custom of knocking on tables instead of clapping.

We also experienced the varied sites of Bielefeld, first enjoying an immersive tour of 'Dr. Oetker Welt' (much taste-testing involved), followed by a visit to the picturesque 13th-Century Sparrenburg Castle

(less taste-testing involved, although according to Mrs Gray their kiosk sold decent coffee).

Thanks to pleasant weather, friendly school pupils, picturesque views and expert planning from Mr Fellows, we all thoroughly enjoyed the trip, and are looking forward to future bonding with the school.

Mae Kempster, Lower Sixth



## MATHS OLYMPIAD FOR GIRLS

Earlier in September we had a record turnout for the UKMT Maths Olympiad for Girls with twelve girls taking part. They worked really hard for two hours, producing full written answers and proofs to some very challenging questions. The results have now arrived! Six girls achieved Merit certificates; Muskaan Assudani, Philippa Bashford, Megan Hull, Apsara Naguleswaran, Chloe Porter and Zaara Soni and three

achieved the highest award of Distinction; Lucy Bardgett, Sophie Jewitt and Rosie Neville who also achieved the best result in the school. Well done to all the girls who took part.

Dr K Barnett



*Click here for tickets!*



# COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

IN THE PAA

**SATURDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 6:30PM**

**SUNDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2:00PM**

*Yarm School's annual festive favourite - don't miss it!*

**TICKETS £6 - [WWW.THEPAAONLINE.ORG](http://WWW.THEPAAONLINE.ORG) - 01642 792587**





Yarm School Association

# CHRISTMAS INDOOR MARKET

SATURDAY 16TH NOVEMBER

10AM - 4PM, YARM SCHOOL

ADULTS £4, CHILDREN FREE, PAY ON THE DOOR

SANTA'S GROTTTO

CRAFT STALLS

UNIQUE GIFTS

FOOD & DRINK

CHILDREN'S GAMES



VISIT SANTA'S GROTTTO

Just £7.50 per child

## CCF SHOOTING FIELD DAY

On 6th November, fifteen of our cadets from the Fourth Year and up headed to the ranges at Catterick for an exciting day of shooting practice. They had the chance to work with the SA80 Cadet GP rifle, trying their hands at both the Dismounted Close Combat Trainer and the live 100m range.

Throughout the day, cadets put their marksmanship to the test in various firing positions, including prone,

sitting, kneeling, and even firing from the fire trench. It was fantastic to see their shooting skills in action, with some excellent scores recorded!

Throughout the day, cadets focused on key marksmanship principles to improve their accuracy and control. They practised steady positioning, breathing techniques, trigger control, and target alignment. These fundamentals are essential for consistent shooting, and cadets

demonstrated great focus in applying them across different firing positions.

Special mention to Shayan Raja in the Fourth Year, who earned the "Shot of the Day" title and took home his marksmanship award.

Congratulations to Shayan and well done to all cadets for a day of superb shooting!

Cpt T Taylor



## PARLEZ-VOUS FRANÇAIS? ODER SPRECHEN SIE DEUTSCH?

Apologies for any imperfections in my spelling or grammar, it has been a little while since my formal language lessons - but I do have a Duolingo German streak in excess of a year!!)

Hot on the heels of a WL where one of our FPs, Brad, discussed his global business experiences post Yarm (see last week's newsletter), we were delighted that Alex Bromiley took the opportunity to share with EconBus Soc his views on the value of languages in Business. Alex is currently studying French A Level and

is hoping to combine his interests in language and enterprise at University. He shared data on communication and statistics on language acquisition. Much discussion ensued and experiences were shared by the audience. It was agreed that language skills can add to the USP of an individual and facilitate them both formally and informally in the workplace and working environment.



Merci Beaucoup oder Danke Schön für Ihre zeit Alex, es war sehr interessant.

Miss C Rhodes

## HISTORY SOCIETY DINNER AT SNEATON CASTLE



On Friday, 8th November, the Yarm School Senior History Society held its annual dinner at the beautiful Sneaton Castle, marking a successful and memorable evening filled with historical insight and reflection. With a strong turnout from both upper sixth and enthusiastic new lower sixth members, the dinner was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate our shared love of history.

The dinner took place in the castle's historic surroundings, which provided the perfect setting to explore this year's theme: Britain as a Maritime Nation. The Chair shared personal memories of his grandfather, Ted Hobday, who served in the Royal and Merchant Navy, and spoke about the impact of Britain's long connection with the sea on both its national identity and his own family. His tribute brought to life the bravery and sacrifice of those who have served at



sea, making the theme feel especially meaningful.

The programme included discussions on various topics, including the RNLI's 200th anniversary, which we marked by reading Charles Causley's poem *Lifeboat* – a tribute to RNLI volunteers who risk their lives at sea. The students shared stories of famous rescues, such as the dramatic Suevic rescue of 1907 and the Daunt Rock Rescue of 1936, which highlighted the resilience of the RNLI crews. We looked at how the RNLI's technology has evolved, from early lifeboats to today's inflatable models, and we discussed the contributions of women to the RNLI, such as the famous rescue by Grace Darling in 1838.

One discussion raised a thoughtful debate around the RNLI's funding as a charitable organisation and the role of government in supporting such essential services. We also touched

on Britain's naval history more widely, reflecting on how the Royal Navy's dominance helped Britain emerge as a global power, and how it played a crucial role during the world wars, especially in moments like Dunkirk.

To conclude, we considered Britain's position today – whether it still holds the maritime influence it once did, and how its island geography keeps the sea essential to national security and trade.

Overall, the 2024 Yarm School Senior History Society Dinner at Sneaton Castle was a great evening, celebrating Britain's maritime heritage and giving us all a deeper understanding of how the sea has shaped our nation's history. It left everyone with a renewed interest in British history and a sense of pride in our past.

Yarm School History Department





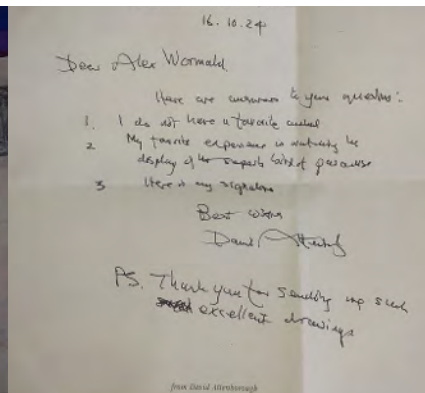
# JOURNEY'S END

20–22 NOVEMBER 2024

Studio Theatre

[Click Here To Buy Tickets](#)

## SECOND YEAR PUPIL CORRESPONDS WITH SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH



I wrote to Sir David Attenborough because I wanted a letter and signature from a famous naturalist. When I got the reply I was very excited because he had replied within a week of me sending my letter to him. I had asked him what his favourite experience was and he said it was when he got to watch the courtship dance of the Superb Bird-of-Paradise.

Alex Wormald, Second Year

## POLITICS SOCIETY WELCOMES KASHMIRI HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS



For many of us Kashmir does not figure prominently on our list of conflict zones around the world, and yet the region, disputed as it is between India, Pakistan and separatists, is rated as one of the most highly and densely policed zones on the planet. This notion no doubt clashes with the images we may hold of Kashmir; indeed a Google search reveals countless scenes of idyllic almost Alpine-like views of mountains and valley. The aggravated dispute reaches back to the time of Indian Independence and Partition.

Our guests on Friday, Sajad Rasool and Nadiya Shafi, were born and raised in the region, and have only known the various waves of restrictions. They both work as journalists from the region, but following a major crackdown on reporting, they are amongst the 'lucky' ones who have managed to flee Kashmir. Other colleagues are imprisoned for lengthy terms on trumped up charges of terrorism for merely reporting on events.

Sajad talked about his form of video journalism, whereby video testimony

is gathered by local residents and forwarded to the journalists, and this forms the basis of the reporting. They also conduct what is known as solution journalism, where the point is not simply to tell the tales, but rather to ameliorate a situation; for example an elderly resident may be without water, and the journalists' intervention with the authorities will seek to remedy this plight.

The separation from home, family and friends is not something easily imaginable, not least when they are not rewarded by remuneration, unlike those who travel overseas for better economic opportunities. Their own daily plights are challenging, and yet they report that they have no choice but to continue to raise awareness of the oppressive atmosphere that their fellow citizens must endure.

Mr S Edwards

## MED DEN SOCIETY DEBATE THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF GENOMIC EDITING IN EMBRYOS

Last week, in MedDen, we hosted an engaging debate on the ethical implications of genomic editing in embryos. The proposition team: Harry D'Ambrogio, Ajay Selvan and Avanish Batra - presented arguments in favour of genomic editing, while the opposition team: Humaira Fatima, Sophia Lin and Muskaan Assudani - the stance against it.

Both sides put forward strong, well-researched arguments and covered a wide range of important issues, like the safety of the technology, its potential consequences, the right to individual choice, and how it could impact social inequality. Both teams also explored moral concerns, the need for proper regulation, and how different cultures and religions might view genetic editing.

One topic that came up repeatedly was the idea of "designer babies." This

concept sparked a lot of debate, as it raises difficult questions about whether parents should be able to choose their child's genetic traits and the social implications of such a choice.

The opposition team effectively highlighted the dangers of genetic selection, arguing that it could worsen social inequalities, with only wealthy people being able to afford genetic enhancements while others are left behind. They also raised concerns about the uncertain future implications of this technology, pointing out that its long-term effects remain unknown.

However, the proposition team—Harry, Ajay, and Avanish—stood out with their well-structured arguments and emerged as the winners. They clearly explained the potential benefits of genomic editing, such as eradicating

genetic diseases and improving quality of life. Their arguments were clear and backed by examples, making a strong case for the positive impact this technology could have on medicine and society. They also addressed the ethical concerns raised by the opposition, suggesting that proper regulations and safeguards could prevent misuse and ensure the technology is used fairly.

The debate highlighted how complex and important these issues are, sparking meaningful discussion about the impact of genetic technology and how society should approach it.

Join us for our next session on Thursday at 1:00pm. See you there!

Naeha Rajaram, Upper Sixth



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## JESSE WINS LUCY PITTAWAY ART COMPETITION

Congratulations to Jesse Bissett Brown, Fourth Year, who won a Lucy Pittaway competition in her age category (13-16 years) with the wonderful artwork below, on the theme of 'New Beginnings'.



"In this piece I wanted to express the treacherous journey of human life and how many New Beginnings come along with that. My piece demonstrates an elderly woman reflecting on her life and how each era in her life will have been a new beginning for her. This could be, for instance, a new job, having children, a marriage, or a new house. These New Beginnings can be daunting, however, they are just something that comes along the path of human life. In my piece I have divided this woman's face into squares which represents all the different eras of her life in which she has undertaken a New Beginning. I used bright colours on some of the squares to vividly convey the start of the exciting or auspicious New Beginnings. On the other hand, I used black and white tones to contrast and show that some new beginnings can be nerve wracking or upsetting to embark on. The different media I have used in each square illustrates the completely random way of life and how each era is different in its own way and they all pull together to create this woman with extraordinary memories and experiences which would never have happened if she didn't start a 'New Beginning'."

Jesse Bissett Brown, Fourth Year

## GEOGRAPHY SOCIETY TALK

James Muir delivered a fantastic talk on the recent school trip to Iceland earlier this week.

James spoke on a number of Geographical topics from glaciers and waterfalls to Icelandic culture!



## CROCHET CREATIVITY

Aphelia Stasinski has just finished this lovely mug cosy in after-school crochet club.

Well done Aphelia!

Dr B Harker



## THERE IS NO I IN TEAM - TOM WALTON RETURNS TO YARM

Beginning autobiographically we heard how choosing a degree in subjects he enjoyed, but arguably more importantly making the most of wider opportunities, enabled Mr Walton to benefit from the launch of the Internet and secure multiple valuable working experiences. After leaving University he worked for several Blue Chip companies including Oracle, Cap Gemini, Orange (now EE) & Sky, and this culminated in him founding an IT consultancy called

Infinity Works in late 2014. After growing and six years later selling his very large and successful business he chose not to settle for retirement and has instead continued to invest in several start-ups and a few established IT companies. He candidly discussed the lessons he has learnt and the value of teamwork and determination. An audience in excess of fifty Sixth Form students with an interest in FAME fitted into B1 for a



fascinating talk and relished the opportunity for such valuable and honest entrepreneurial advice. We are very grateful to Mr Walton for being so generous with his time.

Miss C Rhodes

# Career Cluster Evening: COMPUTER SCIENCE CAREERS

Mon 18th November, 6pm - 8pm

Join us to explore the opportunities provided by studying or working in Computer Science.

Discover the different pathways to your ideal career.

Suitable for 4th Year, 5th Year and Sixth Form students and parents.

Register to attend at:

<https://bit.ly/CompSciCareerCluster>



## MY DAD – THE ATLANTIC WARRIOR

I probably never appreciated the hard work and commitment my Dad has put in throughout his life as I have grown up. From his military career, to setting up and failing in businesses, his corporate career and now his successful business in Teesside. We have been fortunate enough to live in one of the most affluent cities in the world, Dubai, because of my Dad's career and have had the most amazing family holidays and experiences. As I've got older, I've begun to appreciate this so much more and it inspires me to strive to be better daily and see what I can achieve in my life. And then he took it to a new level and one day announced to the family he was going to row across the Atlantic Ocean in a 9m long boat for charity! 3,000 miles battling salt sores, sharks, huge waves and extreme fatigue, I thought then and still think now he's crazy! Half of me expected it to be another one of his crazy ideas and may not come off, but now 2

years later he's 4 weeks away from setting off on the biggest challenge of his life. As I have watched my Dad train the endless hours in the gym, on his erg, in the boat to row across the Atlantic, I can see how focused he is on the task and the end goal. We have missed out on a lot of family time this year and quite often Dad is not there in the morning, busy in the evening and eating his own (very boring) dinners of mainly chicken and broccoli. I have witnessed how tired he has been at times from all the training, long hours and the pressures of running his own business, but he always seems to find space for some family time somewhere.

I've been so proud of the commitment he's shown to this incredible challenge, and I admire his drive to take on something so demanding. At the same time, it's hard to accept that he won't be home for Christmas, missing our family traditions and those special moments

we all look forward to each year (especially his cooking!). But even though he'll be far away, his dedication to his goals makes me want to keep striving to be a better version of myself. Seeing all the hard work he's put in not just for this row but throughout his life to give our family the best he can reminds me of what it means to have passion and purpose. Dad's journey has made me reflect on how that compares to the work I have put in for my A Levels, the planning, preparation, all for the execution and results. Even though it's bittersweet knowing he's following his dreams which means missing Christmas, it makes me even prouder to call him my dad and my role model.

Please follow Dad's journey on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) [@TeamGraftRow](#) and read about them on their website [team-graft.com](http://team-graft.com).

Ava Fitzmaurice, Upper Sixth



## MORE ARTISTS' CORNER: POKÉMON

These drawings are inspired by the popular Nintendo game Pokémon, where you catch creatures to form a team, battle them against other Pokémon, and strive to become the Champion. Each game features a vast array of Pokémon, divided into 18 different types. In addition to the games, Pokémon also has a wide range of merchandise, including cards, plushies, figures, and more.

The challenges that Tiger and I do are mostly because we get bored and want to showcase our artistic talents. These competitions test both our creativity and technical skills, and they give us a chance to admire, laugh at, and learn from each other's

techniques. We hope you enjoy the results!

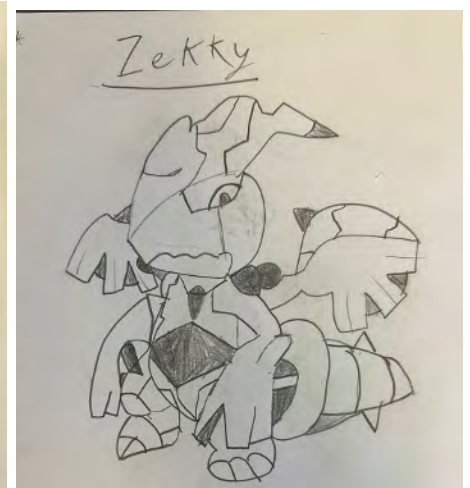
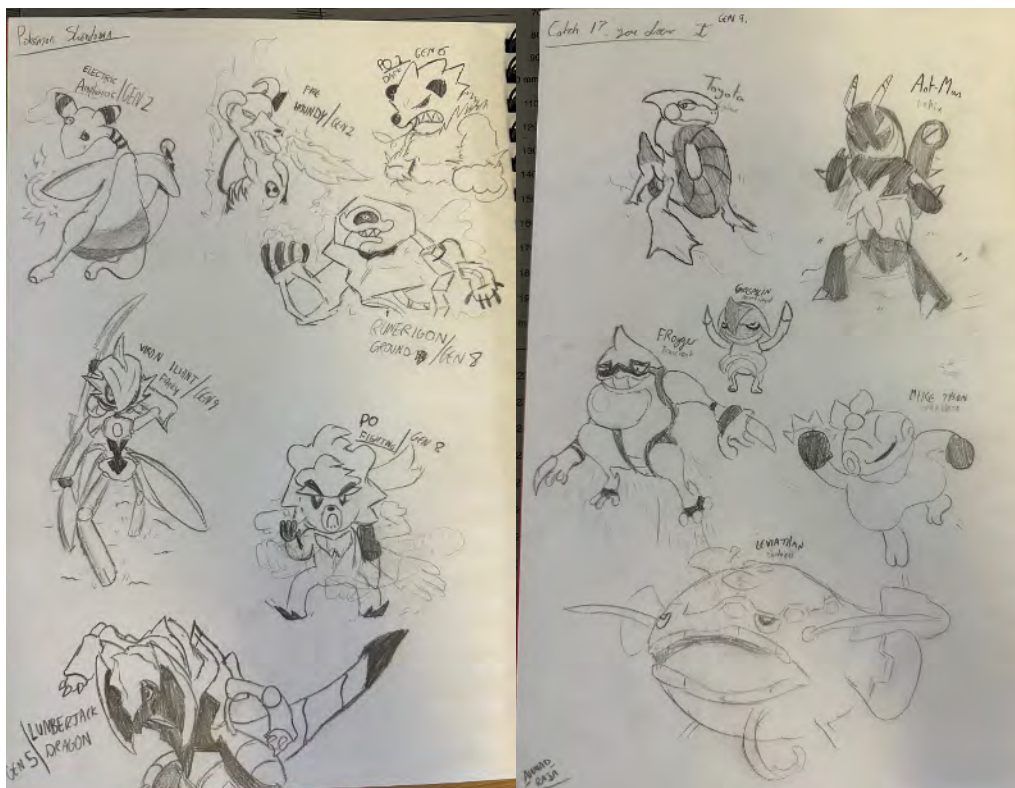
### Challenge 1 (Tiger)

In this challenge, we drew Pokémon based on a random prompt generator, which selected the Pokémon's generation and type. We had about 2-3 minutes to draw each Pokémon using references. Tiger (me) chose to create cute and simple designs, while Ahmad went for a more dynamic, battle-ready style, highlighting each Pokémon's fighting abilities.

### Challenge 2 (Ahmad)

This challenge had us using our Nintendo Switch consoles to catch Pokémon based on random prompts—again! The tricky part was that we had to catch the first Pokémon we encountered in battle. This was nerve-racking, as we could accidentally stumble upon a Pokémon we didn't want to catch or had no idea how to draw. While we could use references, we had to design the Pokémon in a completely different pose from the one shown in the Google image. This challenge was exhilarating and fun, and both Tiger and I thoroughly enjoyed it!

Ahmad Raja, Second Year



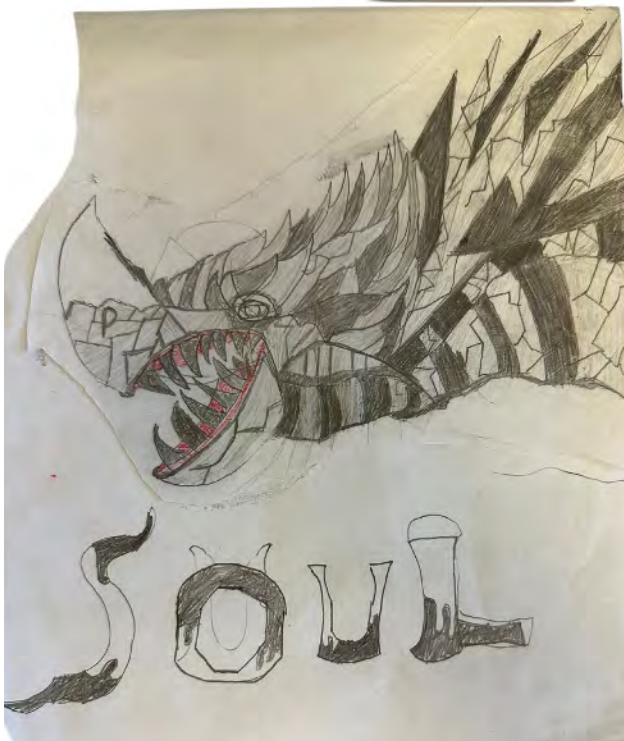
Left and centre, work by Ahmad Raja and, right, two pieces by Tiger Chahal, Second Year.

## ARTISTS' CORNER



Top, Digital artwork by Will McGee, Second Year.

Below left, by Noah Win Tin, First Year, and below right, Charlie Millman, Second Year.



## SPORT WEEK AHEAD

The weeks ahead are now available online. You can [view them here](#).



## SNOW WHITE PANTOMIME

Mirror mirror on the wall...What's the fairest pantomime of them all?

It's Snow White of course, and it's heading to us this Christmas.... Oh yes it is! Tom Rolfe Productions are delighted to be back with a brand new production bursting with dazzling costumes, hilarious comedy, sensational singing, beautiful scenery and the coolest Magnificent Seven ever!

**12th - 24th December: Various times**

[Book Online Here](#)



## THE NICK ROSS ORCHESTRA: THE GLENN MILLER AND RAT PACK ERA

The lights soften, the mood settles. An audience waits for that first moment of sound. The Big Band is poised, relaxed, but with eyes anxious for the lead. And then, as if giving body to an echo, the murmured notes of 'Moonlight Serenade'... and the night, it seems, is suddenly full and timeless.

There are those who watch and listen who tap a shy finger to the melodies, others who follow with a silent foot-beat, still others who murmur softly through the lyrics, and those who simply permit a fleeting smile.

**Saturday 18th January, 7.30pm**

[Book Online Here](#)



## RULE THE WORLD

'Rule The World' have also been featured on ITV1's 'Daybreak' and have had rave reviews from many people including TV personality Ricky Tomlinson, Denise Van Outen. Jason Orange's mother and Mr GARY BARLOW himself who tweeted the band to say he thought they are "brilliant". They are the ONLY Take That tribute show in the land to have ever been praised by Take That's lead singer!

'Rule The World' have been recognised as the Number 1 Take That tribute act in the world.

**Friday 14th February, 7.30pm**

[Book Online Here](#)



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

...MSG ME...

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

## EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' – plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

## CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

## CHAT LOCK

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. They subsequently developed an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for their locked chats. Unfortunately, this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

## COMMUNITIES AND GROUPS

A community is a collection of related groups on WhatsApp. They can consist of thousands of users. Communities can often be used by scammers to target large groups, hoping someone clicks on their link or responds to their requests. In communities and groups, there are multiple ongoing conversations, which results in pressure to respond. Members – even if they are not each other's contacts – will be able to see any messages sent into the group.

## 'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

## FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a 'Forwarded many times' label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original... and might not be entirely factual, either.

## VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution; get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

### ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if a child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

### DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

### THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

### CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any 'view once' content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



...HEY  
OS #WakeUp  
Wednesday

The National College

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For further information and practical tips on WhatsApp privacy settings please click [HERE](#).

## Newsletter, 13.11.2024

It's **Anti-Bullying Week** in the UK, but bullying is an issue that all parents and schools everywhere have to consider.

Children of all ages can benefit from learning to recognise what bullying looks like and understanding the right steps to take when it occurs.

**With the help of Tooled Up, there is plenty that parents can do at home to support these conversations.**

Professor James O'Higgins Norman of Dublin University is one of the foremost experts on bullying in schools. In this fascinating [conversation](#) with Dr Kathy Weston, he describes practical steps that parents and schools can take in tackling it, and shares the best resources available.

Bullies thrive on the silence and complicity of bystanders. We'd love our children to be "upstanders" who challenge harmful behaviour. Read these [tips](#) on raising an upstander, and then read Dr Elly Hanson's [advice](#) on helping children challenge harmful talk in their peer group.

To develop this dialogue at home, use these [Conversation Starters](#) for discussing core family values.

If your child feels vulnerable to bullying it can often be linked to feelings of being "different" or left out. This [Belonging Journal](#) can help – it asks teens to consider their network of friends, their strengths and how they fit in.

### **IMPORTANT: UPCOMING EVENT**

**Have you ever wanted friends and family to experience Tooled Up talks? We invite you and your friends and family to join us for our first FREE public webinar OPEN TO ALL.**

#### **[An Exploration of Parenting Styles: 21st November 19:30 GMT](#)**

What's your parenting style and how may this affect your children and their future outcome?

Join Dr Kathy Weston and psychiatrist, Professor Stephen Scott of King's College London as they talk us through different parenting approaches and how we can best support children within family life. **To register click this link: [Exploration of Parenting Styles Webinar](#)**

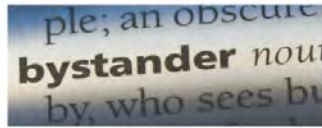
**This free event is open to all so please share this [link](#) with any of your parent friends and family that might like to join the webinar.**

Don't forget to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date with all of our latest updates and resources. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).





Tackling Bullying Podcast



Raising a Positive Bystander or "Upstander"



Helping Your Child Step Away from Harmful Talk



Conversation Starters About Family Values



My Belonging Journal



Parenting Styles Webinar

Don't forget to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date with all of our latest updates and resources. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

