



The Birkenhead Park School



December 2017

# NEWSLETTER

The latest **news** and **activities** from The Birkenhead Park School

## Inspiring visit by the Archbishop of York



The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, visited The Birkenhead Park School in September and sampled a taster of Year 7 History and English lessons.

Continued on [Page 4](#)

## Also featuring...

Well done to our 'Stars of the Term'

Page **3**



The Birkenhead Park School Remembers

Page **5**



Students take a trip to Colomendy

Page **7**



Inspiring visit by the Chief Constable of Merseyside Police

Page **6**



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!





# Headteacher's WELCOME



**Welcome to our final newsletter of 2017! I cannot believe how quickly this year has flown as we prepare for the end of term and look forward to many exciting plans for 2018 and beyond. I hope that you enjoy reading about many of the highlights that have taken place in school this term.**

Looking back to the summer, we are very proud of our Year 11 students' achievements and it was wonderful to celebrate so many success stories back in August. You will see how we celebrated this achievement again recently when many former students returned for our GCSE awards' evening.

Our new school Vision and Values were launched with staff and students in September. Our vision to be "an outstanding school that develops ambition and achieves excellence for all" is firmly driving everything that we do. We believe that our values of Positivity, Ambition, Resilience and Thoughtfulness are key personal qualities and we are determined to help our children and young people develop these skills alongside their academic achievements.

I am so proud of our students; they are wonderful ambassadors for their school. They have enjoyed many opportunities this term to meet a wide range of visitors including the Archbishop of York, the Chief Constable of Merseyside Police and some of the "old boys and girls" of the two predecessor schools at our annual remembrance service. A recent visitor to the school spoke with a group of students from all year groups and was keen to tell me afterwards that "Students have been courteous, proud of the progress that they are making and proud of their school".

**Thank You for your support. I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.**

*Our thoughts go out to the family of one of our governors, Walter Smith, who sadly passed away recently. He had a long association with our school and previously Rock Ferry High School and will be greatly missed.*

**Helen Johnson**  
Headteacher



# Our Stars of the term

**At The Birkenhead Park School, we recognise our students' efforts on a weekly basis.** We would like to congratulate all of our students who received the Headteacher's 'Star of the Week' Award this term for their hard work and achievements.



**"I am sure that you know how very proud I am of our students; I enjoy celebrating their achievements every week when I meet our Stars of the Week."**

**Helen Johnson, Headteacher**



# Inspiring visit

## The Archbishop of York continued

**The Archbishop's visit was part of his 'Believe in Birkenhead' mission which encompassed three days of activities in the region that included a morning at the school with our students and staff.**



The Archbishop of York, along with his fellow clergy visitors from local parishes, joined students in answering questions.

During the session, the Archbishop told a student: "You are unique and if you do not give everything of yourself in the best possible way then it is other people who miss out. It is not just through hard work but your own determination and passion to push yourself enough."



His words reflected the Vision and Values of the school in Positivity, Ambition, Resilience and Thoughtfulness, and gave the students a lot to think about afterwards.



**Charlie in Year 8 said: "I feel as though the Archbishop has given me a huge confidence boost and made me realise I can believe in myself and therefore achieve the best grades possible in school."**



# Ready, Steady, Cook

**Staff and Year 8 students at The Birkenhead Park School were treated to an 'On your marks, get set, cook' food challenge with Chartwells catering recently.**

Working with the 'Putting fun back into food' team, two groups of children and two members of staff competed against the clock in front of their classmates to create the best healthy dish they could from mystery ingredients.

The competition got students excited about eating well whilst learning more about the different food groups.

Year 8 student, Le Tia, said: "It was a lot of fun being given these everyday ingredients and creating something so tasty. I was on the red team and we won with a rice and Quorn stir fry. It was delicious."

The teams had to choose from a selection of healthy ingredients to create a dish which was then tasted by the other students and a winner was chosen using voting cards.

Mrs Barber, winning member of staff on the red team, said: "The students helping me really got stuck in. They chopped the food and gave ideas of which ingredients to put into the dish. It was a great challenge that got them thinking about healthy choices."





# Inspiring visit

## Police Chief Constable

**Merseyside Police Chief Constable Andy Cooke visited The Birkenhead Park School for a Q&A session with some Year 8 students.**

**Chief Constable Cooke has represented the Merseyside Police for over 30 years having obtained an Honours Degree in Politics from Nottingham University and served as a Detective at every rank.**

Year 8 students took the opportunity to grill the Chief Constable, asking highly considered questions about topics such as the work of the Police in the community, local crime and social media.

Chief Constable Cooke took no time in answering whether he was proud of the police that work for him. "I am extremely proud of my officers, I receive many letters of thanks from the public regarding the work they do. Their day to day job involves being heroic and doing acts of kindness daily and they do this all because they want to serve and help the public."

The topic of questioning then led to the relationships Police Officers build with young people, which the Chief Constable was keen to point out is a key part of the work his team undertake. "We continuously look for ways in which to link in with younger people starting at primary school age. They become mini Police Officers and go out with speed guns, pointing them at the cars and then challenging the drivers. It makes it more real for them and for the people caught speeding, being challenged by a child not a Police Officer."

The Chief Constable, who has been involved in the development of crime reduction strategies, brought questions about the type of crimes that concern him into a new light, saying "Internet crime is the biggest worry because of bullying and child exploitation. I always say don't do anything online that you wouldn't do face to face because it is real and it is not always a local crime."

Terrorism was also brought to the fore, with the Chief Constable reassuring students that it is very rare that anything happens and that he now feels agencies need to work together to protect against this type of threat. He also pointed out that the internet plays a crucial role and although it is fantastic technology, it also has a dark side and that the role of Police Officers is to understand how best to guard people against the bad for young people, adults and as a country.



**After his visit the Chief Constable remarked "What lovely students. They are all very smartly presented and they asked great questions, I have been very impressed by them and the school."**





# Year 7



## Trip to Colomendy



After three fun filled days, our Year 7 students returned to school full of stories to tell after an amazing residential at Colomendy in North Wales.

Eighty students went on the trip and took part in a range of activities aimed at building resilience, developing organisational skills and team building.

Head of Year 7 Mrs Kirwan said: "It was worth all the planning and preparation to see all our Year 7's grow in confidence by attempting and achieving new challenges. All the activities needed strong team work, resilience and positivity. The students achieved so much and should be so proud of themselves."

Activities included a zip wire, raft building, puzzle solving, a night line, camp fire and archery.



The students were so happy to have achieved things they never thought they would:

Ruby said: **"I was so proud of myself solving the activities with the help of my friends. I loved every minute of the trip."**

Joel said: **"It was amazing! The zip wire was so high and I didn't think I would be able to do it. I was so happy when I did."**

Abbie said: **"I wanted to stay for another week and would love to go to Colomendy again in Year 8."**



# GCSE

## Presentation Evening

**It was a fond farewell at the GCSE Presentation Evening as students returned to The Birkenhead Park School for a night of celebration.**

**Having gone on to pastures new after their time at the school, a huge number of familiar faces returned to the Assembly Hall for awards, speeches and a look back at some special memories.**

The evening began with a special recorded message from three-time Olympic gold medallist, Peter Reed. He gave an inspirational talk to the students about always applying yourself and then reaping the rewards. With so many now former students having gone on to further study, apprenticeships and employment, Mr Reed's talk was an inspirational reminder that our Class of 2017 have just started out on their own exciting journeys through life, and that mirroring the hard work that they put into their studies at GCSE was a model on which to base their ethics for the rest of their careers.

Mr Reed also reminded the year group to have fun too and appreciate every moment: "it's important to work hard but also enjoy everything that life throws at you."

Subject awards were presented to students who performed exceptionally whilst at the school, whether that was through academic ability or their determination and desire to achieve, with teachers from each department giving a short but touching reflection on why each student was receiving their accolade.

The subject awards were followed by five special awards, celebrating students who had gone above and beyond the call of duty during their time at school.

Elizabeth, Bethany, Mark, Hamza and Jordan were recipients of the honours, and each richly deserved the audience's warm applause.

The grand finale was an amusing but emotional look back at pictures and memories from the students' younger years – some fairly embarrassing but all good humoured, and some special cheers and laughs were reserved for the crowd's favourites.

We wish each and every one of our Class of 2017 every success in their future endeavours, and we are proud of everything that they have achieved, which we are sure is just the start of their very happy and successful futures.



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# The Birkenhead Park School

# Remembers

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**Always a poignant event in the school calendar, The Birkenhead Park School once again invited former 'old boys and girls' of our predecessor schools back to join in a special assembly to mark Remembrance Day.**

Governors, students and staff at the school gathered to reflect upon the horrors of conflict and think about the global suffering caused by war.

After the assembly, invited guests joined Headteacher, Helen Johnson, and Senior Prefects in a private ceremony at the honours boards in the school reception area. The boards acknowledge and remember former Park High School and Rock Ferry High School students who gave their lives in the Second World War.

Chair of Rock Ferry 'old boys' association, George Benson, said: "This service means so much to us all as it remembers the actual students from here that gave their lives in war. It is absolutely fantastic the way the service is run as it is not the teachers that deliver it, it is the students, and there is no better way to learn than getting directly involved.

"I think the way the school goes about it is really something special and is certainly appreciated by everyone that attends."

Mrs Johnson said: "This event is always very special and it is so important to us all that we remember those former students who gave their lives in war. We also take the time to go out to our memorial garden and acknowledge the tragic deaths of former students over the years and the service is always very moving. I know the event means a lot, particularly to our 'old boys and girls', and is a perfect time for them to get together and talk about their friends and memories of their time at the predecessor schools."

Year 8 student, Lily, said "I was really honoured to be asked to take part in this assembly, I felt really proud of myself afterwards and a lot of the guests told me how well we had all done."



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# Library Stories



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**A published writer in Year 7 at The Birkenhead Park School brought in her book to share with her fellow students and teachers, proudly showing off the prize for winning a prestigious Young Writer's competition.**



Amy created a lovely tale for the competition in 2015 called 'The Mermaid Kingdom', which is a short story about a mermaid and a sea monster, earning the chance for her work to be published in paperback.



Amy joined The Birkenhead Park School after she moved from St Ives in Cornwall and has thrived ever since, enjoying subjects such as Mathematics and English. She is also a librarian for the school helping other students to enjoy reading.

Amy said: "I love writing, it is my way of escaping and submerging myself into another world. My favourite subject at school is English and I want to write novels when I am older."

Head of Year 7, Mrs Kirwan, said: "This is a lovely achievement for Amy and one we are glad she has shared with us."

**Three students at The Birkenhead Park School have achieved their bronze certificates and Librarian badges after completing level 1 of the Student Librarian Training Programme.**



Mike, Antonio and Georgieva all completed the first part of the course which included getting to grips with the basics of the library such as knowing the layout of books and resources, keeping the library in order and tidying the shelves. They also had to choose effective displays to correctly showcase the books and suggest appropriate new stock.

Upon completion, they received a certificate and badge which was presented to them by Miss Smith, Learning Resource Centre Administrator.

Miss Smith said: "I am so proud of the students and all the additional hard work they are doing to complete their Librarian course during break and lunch times."

The next level for the students will be silver, which will involve more hands-on work.

# School Vision and Values



**At the beginning of term, our new school Vision and Values were launched with staff and students. Students were put into houses with each one representing the four values - Positivity, Ambition, Resilience and Thoughtfulness.**



Students are recognised for showing examples of how they use our Visions and Values during their school day each week through a points system which is charted and displayed around school, and reward postcards are given to students.

Below are examples students have given to show when they feel they have used the school values:

## Positivity

- By being positive, I have spoken to people and developed new friends.
- On our trip to Colomendy, I didn't say no to any activity and faced my fears.
- In Maths, I was struggling to multiply fractions, but I stayed positive, listened to my teacher and now I know how to do it.

## Ambition

- I tried even harder in a subject because my ambition is based on that subject. I want to get the best possible grades.
- My ambition is to be a teacher myself, so I need to push myself in every lesson to achieve it.
- I have worked very hard and raised my expectations throughout the term and I have gained many skills.



## Resilience

- I have been resilient at doing my work, so I can get the best grades.
- In Science, I was struggling to draw cells for the first time, but I kept going and got it right in the end.

## Thoughtfulness

- I smile at others and use good manners.
- I respect my teachers and they respect me.
- My friend and I have helped a very shy girl to make new friends and have tried to make her less shy.





Merry Christmas  
and a   
Happy New Year  
 from everyone at



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