



# THE WORD

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AGSB

ONLINE





# HEAD TO HEAD



Firstly, welcome back to readers of The Word! I hope one and all have had the opportunity to enjoy some quality family time over the Christmas and New Year break.

In late November we received a phone call from Alastair McCall, an editor from the Sunday Times. He informed us that AGSB had been named the leading state secondary school in the North West in a major UK wide schools guide. The 26th edition of The Sunday Times Parent Power identifies the 2,000

highest-achieving schools in the UK, ranked by their recent examination results. This is a fitting reward to our staff who have worked very hard to ensure that curriculum change at GCSE and A level has been implemented with as smooth a transition as possible enabling our students to achieve at the highest levels.

In the last edition of The Word, I stated that my key aim for the Christmas Term 2018 was to get 'under the skin' of AGSB and to learn as much as I possibly could about every facet of school life. I am happy to confirm that I have fulfilled that 'key aim' and have been immensely impressed with my observations to date.

As I enter my second term as Head Master, we are looking forward to a busy start to 2019. Last term, after input from staff and students, the Senior Leadership Team identified 5 Core Values for AGSB. Our aim now is to launch, develop and embed our new Core Values of Respect, Love of Learning, Responsibility, Inclusivity and Resilience in all stakeholders. The aim of these values is to create more outward-facing, altruistic, community-minded students, who are resilient, mentally-healthy and employable in a highly competitive international job market.

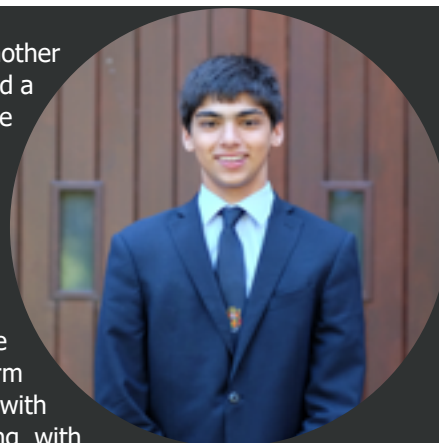
We are also committed to be a leading school in the area of Mental Health. In 2019 Dick Moore, a leading expert on teenage well-being will be presenting to students and parents, we will have a number of trained Peer Mentors in the 6th Form who will be working with younger boys and we will also be launching the Peer Education Project (more information to follow).

I wish everyone a very happy and prosperous 2019.

Head Master

“Our aim now is to launch, develop and embed our new Core Values”

Welcome back to another term. I hope you had a restful and enjoyable Christmas break. I am sure the Year 11s and Year 13s particularly enjoyed this after their Mock Exams just before Christmas! Last term was a busy one with concerts, fundraising with Chad's Challenges' Ladies Night and Remembrance services as some of the highlights. Luckily the weather has been relatively kind so the majority of sports fixtures have been played with some great results – in November more than 50 fixtures across a number of different sports.



This term will be vital for those sitting public examinations at the end of the year. Even if mocks haven't gone quite to plan there is still time to solve any issues to achieve the best results possible. However, as well as hard work, there are many trips abroad this term – some educational and some less so! These could not go ahead without the support of the teaching staff who organise and plan them. I particularly remember the visit to the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin which was very moving but also the enjoyment of the football tour to Barcelona.

The start of a new year is a time to reflect and an opportunity to change habits and behaviours which are not beneficial. It could be simply being more organised with homework and not leaving it to the last minute or an entirely different approach to your work and revision. The important thing is to be honest with yourself so that you can make changes that will have a positive impact.

I wish you all a happy and successful Spring Term.

James Mazarelo

# AGSB AWARD WINNERS



## AGSB NAMED NORTHWEST STATE SECONDARY SCHOOL OF THE YEAR

The **Sunday Times** writes:

The top performing schools in Northwest of England are revealed in Parent Power, The Sunday Times Schools Guide 2019, published in The Sunday Times and online on Sunday, November 25.

The 26th edition of Parent Power identifies the 2,000 highest-achieving schools in the UK, ranked by their recent examination results. A fully searchable national database by school name, local authority, town and postcode, together with regional rankings are available to Times and Sunday Times subscribers at: [thesundaytimes.co.uk/parentpower](https://thesundaytimes.co.uk/parentpower)

As well as assessment of all academic results on a school-by-school basis, Parent Power enables parents to compare the performance of a given school with other schools in the same town, local authority or nationally. There are also live links to school websites and schools' most recent inspection reports. Parent Power is widely acknowledged as the most authoritative survey of the country's best schools. The rankings in the secondary school league tables are determined by the percentage of examination entries gaining A\* to B grades

at A-level this summer (which is given double weighting) and the percentage of entries returning A\* and A grades, and those graded 9, 8 and 7, at GCSE. They are published several weeks ahead of the official Government tables for secondary school performance.

Altrincham Grammar School for Boys has won **The Sunday Times Northwest State Secondary School of the Year** award. The school saw its GCSE results increase by 6.7 percentage points to 78.2 A\*/A grades. Four in five A-level grades came in at either A\*, A or B grades helping the school to jump six places in the national league table and moved up rank in this year's regional table as a result.

Alastair McCall, editor of Parent Power, said: "Trafford is lucky to have some of the finest grammar schools in England. Competition to win a place at Altrincham Grammar School for Boys is tough, but the rewards are immense."

"It is consistently one of the highest-achieving state grammar schools, but the school is about so much more than just academic success. The boys are encouraged to be themselves and to achieve and contribute to all areas of school life. It thoroughly deserves its success."

“Trafford is lucky to have some of the finest grammar schools in England”



# INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

This year we have a focus in school on mental health. We are looking at raising awareness of such issues and engaging in discussions across the school and the curriculum. The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust has already been in to talk to the Years 12 & 13 about suicide and depression. They will be back in the Summer term to work with the Year 9s & 10s. Several Sixth Formers are being trained in being Peer Mentors to younger students to help those who are struggling and who might initially be reluctant to engage with adults in the community. Staff are also learning how to take care of their own mental health in the summer term.

In November, during the week of International Men's Day' (November 19th), assemblies focused upon depression and suicide, and what to do if you find yourself in a dark place. As part of that, a young man named Alex Swinton (Year 12) performed the poem which he composed himself, about his own dark thoughts. It is an astonishingly insightful, powerful and perceptive piece. Alex performed it before his peers and then spoke about his experiences, and how he came through such a testing time.

I am immensely grateful to Alex for being so brave for doing this. When 'one of your own' can talk openly about such issues then the message is that more poignant and relevant. Suicide is one of the biggest killers of young men today between the ages of 14-24, and the message to talk to others is a vital one to get across. We know this only too well at AGSB having lost a young man from our midst, William Menzies in the recent past.

As a teenager, it's normal to feel sad, down in the dumps or even depressed once in a while. Most of the time you'll be able to cope with your problems with the help of your parents/guardians, friends or a counsellor. If I'm thinking about suicide, is there anything that will help me feel better?

There are many things you can do to feel better and to solve the problems that lead to suicidal thoughts. The best thing you can do is get help from a therapist, who is trained to help you figure out what is bothering you and help you cope with your problems.

There are other things you can do to help yourself feel better, including:

Getting regular exercise

Eating well and getting enough sleep

Spending time with close friends and family and others who care about you

Having a hobby such as sports, music, writing, art, etc.

Helping others (for example, volunteering at a local food bank)

Using drugs or alcohol to try to make yourself feel better is NOT a good solution. There's a higher risk of acting on suicidal thoughts when under the influence of alcohol/drugs.

Edward Hall

*Picture the scene:*

*A boy sat at a computer, a machine usually used for memes, which has hopes and dreams stacked on one another as icons on a screen, like strokes on a painting. But there he is waiting. Searching for some kind of sign, for a reason to stop his wailing. He needs someone there to do the explaining, to show where the answers are, to stop his debating. Because that boy is Alex Swinton and the date is 7th November, 2016. And to Alex it seems like it will be his last 7th November.*

*He has a document open: "Diary, I guess" and like a Catholic at a church he uses it to confess his struggles and the mess that he is in. The file is full of reasons not to commit suicide - except it isn't. The lines finish less than a quarter of the way down the page. The rest is blank space, waiting hesitantly for Alex to chase those reasons, the meaning to life, and bring it to pen. And when, inevitably he cannot - it makes him face those unpleasant plans. Like a pause at the end of a stanza, it makes him think and shuffle his hand, dealing cards nobody should be dealt.*

*Alex is fourteen. Teen. Barely more than a child. He should be well mannered and squeaky clean, not awake at three thinking about hanging from a tree. Alex isn't special - this isn't surprising. Every day there are millions who think, as they are rising from their beds, "Yes. Today is the day." Then they go out and play at being safe and happy. To them, "To be or not to be" is not a speech but a mantra, each of them Hamlet in the face of disaster.*

*Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness mean nothing to someone's whose life is the jailer and who's consciousness refuses them the honour of even knowing what to pursue. They are here in this room. They are here in every room. But walk into a class and ask "do you need help?" and none of them will answer. Ask, and some will instantly become the best dancer you've ever seen, evading the question until it hangs in the air. To admit you can't navigate this twisted road, that mentally you are lost - to some, that means that you shouldn't be trusted to drive. We all say that we strive to improve, and yet - when our plane is in a nosedive, we don't try pull up. To say "I'm lonely" is the bravest thing to do. Because to so many, that means you've failed.*

*No teen has failed. No adult, by this metric. You aren't there alone. Pick up the phone, talk to a helpline, find that person who wants to be "that person". Your brother, your friend, your parent, your teacher. Someone barely more than a stranger, someone who sees your heart as a piece of art that needs protecting. Someone. Someone. Someone. Because they are there.*

*At some point, they will have known an Alex. To many, they will have been an Alex. To more still - they are an Alex. Don't be there alone. Let someone reshuffle your cards. Let someone pull up the plane. Let someone lend you their compass, because your map is useless without one.*

*Let someone in.*

*Picture the scene:*

*A boy sat at a computer, a machine usually used for memes, which has hopes and dreams stacked on one another as icons on a screen, like strokes on a painting. And he is waiting. For the future, for the present. For his past is his past, and he is whole again now. Or, as whole as he can be. Because he has a future. He enjoys the present. Because that boy is Alex Swinton and the date is 1st November 2018. And to Alex, it's the first day of the rest of his life.*

Alex Swinton





# CHINA SUMMER CAMP

On Saturday 14th of July, 14 AGSB students, Mr Smith and Mrs Ward embarked on an exciting journey with other UK school groups to broaden their horizons and learn about the rich and fascinating Chinese culture and language. The experience was incredibly enriching and eye-opening for all of us, and the long journey was worthwhile as we forged amazing friendships along the way.

The two flights aboard the Emirates Airbus A380 were extremely comfortable as the entertainment system was fantastic. In fact, between that and some sleep (not much, admittedly!), the flights from Manchester to Dubai and then to Beijing went quite fast. We arrived in Beijing in the afternoon, checked in to the hotel and had dinner with the other school groups accompanying us before turning in to recover some sleep.

The first morning in Beijing was spent visiting the summer palace and its beautiful lakes and gardens, where we learned that it was a place of repose for the Emperors of the Qing dynasty during the hot summer months. That afternoon we travelled to Prince Gong's Palace, strolling along the seemingly endless gardens and courtyards in awe at the vibrant architecture of the buildings. After we had enjoyed a taste of Beijing's monuments, we flew to the city of Chengdu (in the Sichuan province). Though we arrived late, we were impressed by the size of the westernised hotel we would be staying in for the following days.

In Chengdu, we finally met our hosts at the Xindu no.1 Middle School and attended the opening ceremony of the Summer Camp, followed by two days of cultural activities such as Tai Chi, Chinese traditional dancing, paper-cutting, Guzheng (Chinese zither) lessons and painting, as well as various Mandarin lessons to improve our language skills. The Chinese students were all extremely friendly and welcomed us warmly, helping us to understand more about their customs and traditions.

The following days, we did some tourism around Chengdu. For example, we went to the Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding Base where we had the chance to see adult pandas in their natural habitat of the bamboo forest as well as panda bear cubs in incubators. We also visited the Dujiangyan Irrigation System (a vast system of rivers and artificial water channels designed by the ancient inhabitants of Chengdu to provide clean drinking water for the city) and Mount Qingcheng (considered one of the birthplaces of the Chinese religion of Taoism), which proved to be a place of breath-taking natural beauty with rolling hills of forest stretching out as far as we could see from the peaceful mountaintop temple. Along with this, we visited the Jinsha archaeological site museum to find out more about the history of Sichuan.

Another curious trip we made was to the Sichuan Opera. There is a traditional form of opera in Sichuan that involves a technique known as 'Face Changing', whereby actors dressed in traditional Chinese robes and wearing Chinese masks spontaneously switch the design and colour of their mask to the audience's amazement. In spite of our efforts to spot the trick, none of us were able to say for sure how they did it. We were later told by our tour guides that it is a very well-guarded secret amongst face-changers which they refrain from sharing with the general public.

Fortunately, there were plenty of chances to buy souvenirs, particularly when we went shopping in the city centre and the picturesque market stalls of the Jinli Folk Culture Street. In terms of food, we were certainly not let down either as many of us tried different local delicacies (including scorpions!), and the local restaurants had a great variety of exotic dishes. However, the highlight of our experience of Chinese food was most definitely the Sichuan Hot Pot we had a chance to try. It consisted of a range of meats, dumplings and fish balls that you could dip in a spicy pot of pepper soup stock to cook them, infusing them with all its flavours and aromas.

On most of the evenings we spent in Chengdu, we went out into the local markets, shops and parks to experience local life, which was lively and bustling. For instance, there was dancing in the park outside our hotel (which we even took part in on one occasion) and we found a shop nearby that sold dozens of weird and wonderful varieties of Oreos not available in the UK.

One of the days we spent in Chengdu was dedicated to going out with our hosts' families to further experience local life. Many of us went to the city centre and went shopping or to the cinema with our hosts, and we all found it incredibly interesting to spend an entire day getting to know how people our age spend their free time in Chengdu. Also, it provided a great opportunity for Mandarin speaking practice.

On the penultimate day in Chengdu, we drove out of the city to see the huge Leshan Giant Buddha statue carved out of a cliff face on the confluence of the Min River and the Dadu River in southern Sichuan. The sheer magnitude of the 71m tall statue was stunning, and many local Buddhists could be seen meditating at the foot of the giant, emphasising the cultural value of the monument.

The following day it was time for the closing ceremony of the Summer Camp, which celebrated the value of bringing together different cultures and marked the end of our stay in Chengdu. After we had said goodbye to our hosts, which was quite an emotive experience for both us and the Chinese students, we set off towards the airport for our flight back to Beijing.



In Beijing we did some more sightseeing for three more days, including the Forbidden City which is made up of various squares and mansions (containing a total of nearly 9,000 rooms) and the Shichahai Lake. Of course, we visited the Great Wall of China which was more majestic than we could have imagined, snaking between the lush green hills into the distance and providing outstanding views of the landscape. We also visited the 2008 Olympic Park, including the Bird's Nest Stadium and the Water Cube.

On the final day of the trip, we visited the Temple of Heaven, a fakes market (with Rolex watches that ran backwards and other such marvels) and Tiananmen Square, one of the largest

squares in the world, surrounded by various government buildings.

On 26th July we flew back to Manchester, eager to share all the wonders of our trip with our families and friends.

The trip was a fabulous once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I would thoroughly recommend it to anybody who might consider taking part.

Sergio Mendez-Allend



# EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES

On the 26th September every year, European Day of Languages is held. It celebrates diversity in Europe and the advantages of learning multiple languages. Europe is rich with languages: there are over 200 European languages and many more from citizens whose origin is not European. With business worldwide increasing, there has never been a better time to learn a foreign language. Learning a language enables the world to understand each other, to help us overcome cultural differences and language barriers. This year, there were thousands of events happening all over the world, from Cuba to the Czech Republic, the UAE to Uruguay.

Learning a language creates many opportunities in the world. Being plurilingual makes communicating far easier for everyone whether you are on holiday, on a business trip, making new friends abroad or solving political issues.

At AGSB, the year seven boys were challenged to create hats representing a language, culture or country. Some which stood out included an Eiffel Tower hat and a decorated sombrero. In the canteen we had a European themed menu and a quiz in one of our language lessons. There were also sheets of basic words on the tables at lunchtime so again we could learn a little of a new language. We all had a great time and learned something new as well.

Thomas Hill



# GERMAN EXCHANGE 2018

The German Exchange 2018 was probably the most fun I've had all year. Making new friends and helping them learn a language for the future was great. When the exchange students arrived on Thursday, I was a bit worried about how well I would get on with them and if they could speak some or any English. Though, to my surprise, their ability to speak the English language was brilliant with them forming sentences and asking questions about the country and our lives.

On Friday I took my exchange to school to show what English schools are like and maybe to understand the culture a bit better. All my German friends were very confused by our uniform! After Friday some of our friends went to Lucas' house to play games and make pizzas. Over the weekend, I went on a very muddy walk to Tatton Park and sat out with hot chocolate and watched and fed the ducks. My exchange student and I also went to my hockey match and as we were playing, the exchanges started to play hockey on the side and after the match we had our own little game with a 4v4.

On Sunday, we had a lovely roast dinner to show my exchange a bit of British food. On Monday we went for another day at school, but by far the best bit of the trip was the day out to Blackpool Pleasure Beach. I don't really like rides, but all my German friends were amazed at the height and sheer scale of the park and the rides. I'm pretty sure we went on almost every ride except for the Big One which was closed on the day due to high winds. We ate doughnuts and went on one of the oldest attractions there, the Big Dipper, about 4 times. The next day the Exchanges went on a trip to the Beatles museum and shopping at Liverpool 1. On Thursday morning we went to T1 to say goodbye to all our friends as they left for the airport.

In Germany, we had a great time; arguably some people had a better time than others, but nonetheless it was great fun. On the first day we spent a long time in the airport where we ate our lunch. When we arrived in Stuttgart we met our partners and their families and went with them to their homes. Everyone was very welcoming and clearly pleased to see us eventually arrive.

When I arrived at my hosts' home we ate, played a game and then went to bed. On the next day we had a trip to a monastery. It was interesting, but I think everyone was eager to go to the next place, which was the Ritter Sport Factory. It was the best place ever! We looked round and saw each step in great detail of how they were made. Then, I went to the shop, where Ritter Sport Cubes were 69 cents. I bought around 20 bars and then left with my bag being packed to the brim.

The next day we had school. It is a lot different to our school as they have 45 minute lessons and on Thursday my exchange had 9 lessons! Also, for lunch you can leave the school and go out to buy lunch instead of having to buy it at school; you are also allowed to bring packed lunches. Then on Friday we went without the exchanges to a Dinosaur Museum and then to go shopping in Stuttgart. On the weekend me, my exchange and a couple of our friends went to the Trips Dill Theme Park which then became a Spooky World type place and there were people hiding in bushes and super scary mazes. It was probably the best holiday I've had in a while and I would recommend it! I am going next year, without a doubt. Everyone is really nice and understanding and the families are super friendly.

Louis Driver





# YEAR 8 SPAIN TRIP

On a warm Monday morning, I arrived at AGSB and was greeted by a large coach which would transport me to East Midlands Airport. I was greeted by my friends and soon after we left for a two-hour drive to the airport. On arrival I emptied my water down the sink as you are not allowed to take any liquids through security. Once we passed through security, we strolled in little groups and met back in time for the flight to Spain. My friends and I headed over to Burger King, yes at 10 in the morning, and grabbed some nibbles for the flight. We then went to duty-free and tried some free aftershave samples before boarding our flight. I plugged my headphones into my tablet and began to watch episodes of 'Stranger Things' for the next two and a half hours. Once we got to Valencia, we went through routine security checks and boarded a coach. After a fifteen-minute drive, we reached our hotel. After receiving room keys, we dropped our baggage off and went to the local shopping centre for something to eat. We were given about an hour to eat. I went to a coffee shop serving traditional Spanish pastries. After this, our Spanish host took us to a churros bar. We then met up with our teachers and headed back to the hotel for a swim in the pool. After some swimming, we went to the bar and ordered some 'mocktails'. Later, we went downstairs to the restaurant where we enjoyed a buffet. Once everyone had recharged, we headed out to the local park where everyone, including the teachers, played some football.

On the second day, we embarked on a tour of central Valencia with a very knowledgeable tour guide. We explored the very intricate parts of Valencia that only a true local would know. The highlight of the day was at around 10am. We visited 'Torres de Serranos' and explored the local area as well as trying some local cuisine. Later, we went to 'The Central Market'. Here we were allowed lots of time to explore the market with our friends. Half of the market was occupied by a meat market whilst a quarter was full of souvenir shops and the rest with local grocers. My friends and I bought souvenirs. After our time was up, we went on a coach to 'Albufera'. In this area, we went on a boat ride across beautiful waters. The ride lasted for about one hour and was extremely relaxing.

We went back to the central market as everyone enjoyed it so much. We were given lots of time to go and explore all the shops and eat lunch. Before we did this, we visited 'Plaza de Reina'. This very old building was very tall, and all boys ventured to the top. At the top, we were surrounded by wonderful views of Valencia. We then went out and explored the local shops. After hours of shopping, we went to the science museum. This was fun as everything was interactive. Later in the evening, we were treated to bowling and played until midnight.

On the final day, we all took a dip in the pool and just relaxed. My friends and I enjoyed our final mocktails and cleared our rooms. Before we knew it, our fantastic holiday had ended, and we were back in England.

Taiyyib Arshad







## YEAR 8 FRANCE TRIP

On Monday July 16th, 43 boys and 5 staff departed AGSB for a most memorable adventure to La belle France, Paris. It certainly was an adventure on the journey and we had so much fun on the coach, we sat next to our friends, playing games, and even cheering and singing.

When we arrived at the picturesque château (Château de Grand Romaine), we were greeted by the amazing staff who welcomed us and presented an amazing welcome meal.

On Tuesday we woke up early as the amazing smell of the fresh croissants came into the room. After breakfast we went to the Cite des Sciences et de l'Industrie, a very large and interactive science museum. We explored independently, and it was a very interesting experience where lots of future technology was on show. Montmartre and the beautiful Sacré-Coeur was our next stop and really tested our French as we fended for ourselves, visiting the cathedral, souvenir shopping, dining and even haggling with artists for caricatures.

However, 90% of our phone storage was already used the next day when we went to the Eiffel Tower. The view was incredible, and everyone kept taking photos because the views could not possibly be described with words. Our tour around the Imperial Centre continued as we visited Notre Dame and the Quartier Latin another magnificent photo stop, where we also found an abundance of places to satisfy our desire for ice cream or authentic crêpes- delightful! As the evening fell, the sun shone on Paris with an amazing light and warmth that vitalised us and illuminated the banks of the Seine, the amazing buildings and our path to and through the Louvre Palace.

Thursday was a day everyone was waiting excitedly for, as we all visited Parc Asterix, a fantastic theme park in a beautiful

setting with many different rides. These rides varied from high in the sky thrill seeking roller coasters and water rides to a more sedate dolphin show. Everyone had a fantastic time as managed to go on all the rides we wanted. We have all returned more enlightened thanks to France and the amazing city of Paris, the city of lights.

Yaser Ahmad



## YEAR 7 GERMANY TRIP

Forty boys, Ms Cathcart (Head of Year 9), Mr Cummins (Head of General Studies) and Miss McCann (from the Maths department) were away on the annual summer term school trip in Koblenz, Rudesheim and Deutches Eck in Germany. They experienced the richness of German culture, eating famous delicious food and learning German as they travelled through scenic towns and villages.

We departed from school on the 14th July 2018, at 01:15, conversing by a luxurious air-conditioned coach. We reached Moselle on the 15th, connecting with our transfer from Dover to Calais and by the evening we had arrived at the accommodations and checked in.

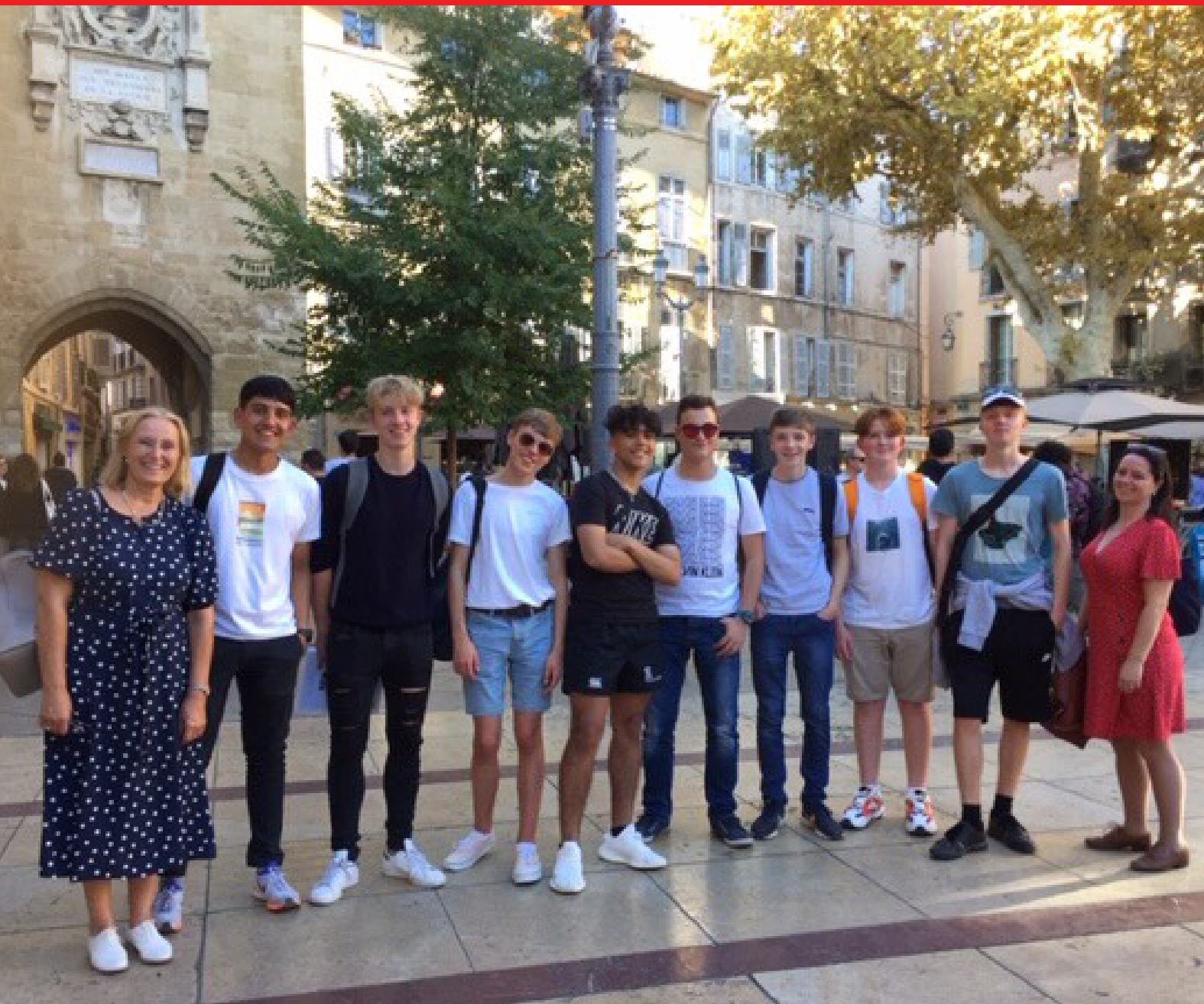
Our first day of sight-seeing, we travelled to Koblenz – an ancient city in central Germany a gateway to terraces, vineyard and a ruined castle of the Rhine Gorge- and here we visited the Deutches Eck (known for a monumental equestrian statue of William I) in the latter part of the day we visited Marksburg castle – a castle above the town of Braubach in Rhineland-Palatinate - then we ended the day with pinup Bowling. Our second day of sight-seeing, the day that many of us had been waiting for, visiting Phantasia Land whose slogan is 'Hier ist dein Spaß' meaning: here is your fun; which is what many of us felt when enjoying the thrilling amount of rides and rollercoasters.

Our final day in Germany had arrived quickly - to our disappointment. Beautiful views greeted us as we travelled up cable cars in Rundensheim, gazing over a multitude of fields. In the afternoon we visited Siegfrieds museum, an automated instrument museum, which we all found fascinating. After eating ice-creams we then embarked on a relaxing river cruise down the river Rhine.

Aiyush Gupta







## SIXTH FORM FRENCH TRIP

The recent Sixth Form visit to Aix-En-Provence was a truly unique trip. Leaving in the first week of October, we were able to experience the French language and culture while basking under the sunny skies. During our stay, we were looked after by local host families, who welcomed us into their houses with open arms. The host families were very helpful and useful, as each evening we would speak with them about a wide variety of topics at dinner, all in French.

During the day we attended the nearby language school, where many other (and mostly older) international students were also learning French. In the mornings we had lessons at the school and in the afternoons we went out to different places of interest in the region of Provence. These excursions

included a day's visit to Avignon (and the famous Pont d'Avignon), to the famous artist Cezanne's studio and to a nearby "Savonnerie".

The visit was completely unique and was both educational and enjoyable. Our spoken French progressed massively in just a few days and I was surprised at the scale of my own improvement over such a short time. I would thoroughly recommend this trip to anyone interested in the French language or culture.

Oliver Huggon

## STEAM FAIR

After school on 12th July, the Year 10 STEAM Fair took place. This was a careers fair, focusing on opportunities within the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths but involved a wide variety of other subjects as well.

Throughout the evening, the Coleman Hall was packed with stalls from over 30 different organisations, hoping to interest and educate the curious pupils as they looked around. The event was aimed at informing students and parents about their options once they leave school and about opportunities available to them before that such as work experience. It gave us a great idea of what to expect and what would be expected of us if we wanted to follow a certain path.

There were also presentations from visitors and teachers who talked about their experiences in their field of expertise and how they reached that point. Overall, the evening was extremely helpful, answering many questions that the students had about their future and giving them an insight into potential career options.

Awais Khawaja





# CANADA RUGBY TOUR

On embarking on a two week trip around Alberta, Canada, our tour party of forty-two boys and seven staff was certain that the weather would be scorching, there would be a great deal of travelling, the opposition would be much bigger than us and we would all be exhausted at the end. What none of us could have foreseen, however, was just how unique and memorable the two weeks in Canada would be.

In rugby terms, the tour was a complete success, with both the U18s (captained by Anthony Stratford) and U17s (captained by Dan Haslett) recording four victories out of four and scoring in excess of 500 points in the process with some outstanding team and individual displays. The ability of the lads to enjoy the excursions and social activities but then make the switch into rugby mode for training and matches alike set us up well for success in the fixtures. There were times when we had to improvise - training at the side of the road in Jasper springs to mind! As much as the tour was a team endeavour, certain lads received just credit for their contributions at the end of the tour:

Player of the Tour: Harry Martin

Tourist of the Tour: Luke Rink

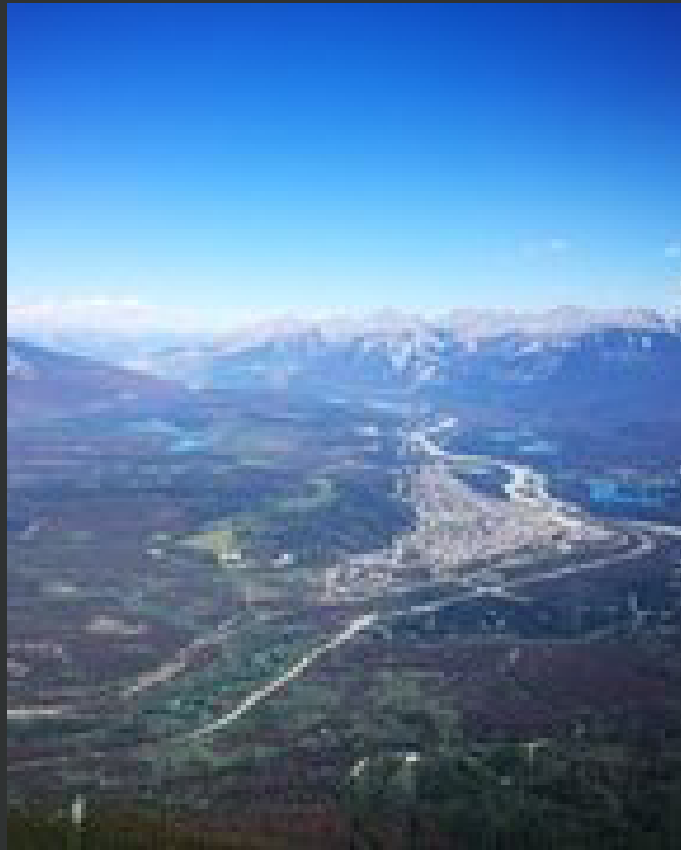
Tackle of the Tour: Seb Affi

Try of the Tour: Will Nicholson

So much of a rugby tour is about what happens off the pitch, and this aspect of the tour was packed from start to finish. With trips to the Calgary Stampede, Banff National Park, Athabasca Glacier, West Edmonton Mall and more, we all got a full 'Canadian experience' (as well as ridiculous suntans and amazing Alberta steaks). The billeting experience of staying with Canadian host families was an entirely new experience for most, but time spent with the billets constituted the most memorable parts of the tour for many of the lads.

There's always the cliché of 'what goes on tour, stays on tour' - as well as the obvious reasons, this is also because it is impossible to truly describe what an experience it was to anyone who was not there. These tours are amazing opportunities for any young rugby player, and due to the work of Mr Meakin, the PE department and the touring squad, this one was a huge success which bodes well for future years. Thirteen students from year 13 went to Canada as their last contribution to AGSB. After such a fantastic send off, the 2018 Senior Rugby Tour will undoubtedly be a highlight of our time at school looking back over the seven years.

Alex Patel





# HOLLAND RUGBY TOUR 2018

## Sunday 14th October

21 boys set out on a warm, sunny Sunday afternoon on a Dutch adventure. Our miniature bus was very well received, particularly due to the inclusion of a USB charger for every seat (an essential for the social media faithful). Our first stop was in Hull where we took in the wonders of The Deep (<https://www.thedeep.co.uk>), an excellent, non-profit exhibition with underwater wildlife from starfish to sharks.

Our ferry was merely a short coach ride away. We were able to board quickly, and the boys were able to familiarise themselves with their cabins and the layout of the ship. The arcade appeared to be a particular favourite. Our evening meal also went down particularly well (as any buffet would with a self-respecting rugby team).

## Monday 15th October

Welcome to Holland! After a similarly hearty buffet breakfast, we re-boarded our coach and set out for a very pleasant morning walk along the coast of Scheveningen where the boys were allowed some free time to explore the promenade.

Our afternoon consisted of a brief stop at our accommodation; the 'Stay OK Hostel' in Den Haag, before visiting the local bowling alley where the boys got their first taste of authentic Dutch chips as well as a few rounds of bowling. Bruce Bailey

proved to be the most proficient of the boys, with Mr Rawson, somewhat questionably, the champion of the staff game. Now to the main event; the rugby matches. We arrived with plenty of time before the first match at the home of our first opponents Haagsche. The boys looked and operated very professionally in preparation for their first game of the tour. This preparation paid off as AGSB ran up a 10-point lead going into half time with the 'Try of the Tour' being scored by Arun Dobson in the far corner of the large Haagsche pitch.

The second half, unfortunately didn't go as well as the first did and it was suspected that some of the tiredness from the previous day's travel had finally kicked in. The final score ended at Haagsche Rugby Club 25 : 10 AGSB. The man of the match was Arun Dobson, because of his brilliant performance.

## Tuesday 16th October

After a well-earned nights rest, the boys enjoyed a thoroughly continental breakfast before heading back out on the bus to the town of Breda for some exploring and shopping, before reconvening at McDonald's for a team lunch.

Our second game of the tour saw us hosted by Oisterwijk Rugby Football Club, more commonly known as The Oysters. This fixture has been a part of the school's tour to Holland for the last 12 years and we discovered that one of the Oysters



coaches had in fact, played in the fixture against AGSB some 10 years ago! This excellently demonstrates the community values of Rugby and the Dutch community alike.

After learning from our mistakes in the first game, the previous evening AGSB went on to rack up a significant number of well worked team tries as well as some superb individual efforts which were backed up by the kicking efforts of Scott Swarbrick and Adam Prichard. Final Score Oisterwijk Rugby Football Club 0 – 41 AGSB. The man of the match was Jamie Ryan, for another incredible game.

## Wednesday 17th October

After a jam-packed few days and a thoroughly exciting evening, Wednesday morning was taken at a much slower pace as boys took it to relax at the hostel. For lunch, we were able to sample another Dutch speciality at a pancake house back on Scheveningen promenade. The more cultured amongst us opted for one of several savoury options whilst most couldn't resist a pancake accurately named 'Choc-a-Bloc'.

Next on the agenda was go-karting at Race Planet which saw groups of 6 face off in the quest for the fastest lap of the day. The final standings saw podium finishes for Tom Draper and Angus Morris (2nd and 3rd respectively) with Scott Swarbrick proving to be the quickest around the two-tiered track.

Our final game saw us entertained by Gouda Rugby Club where the AGSB side ran riot, seemingly scoring at will even when the squad selection was thoroughly shuffled. The final score? An incredible Gouda Rugby Club 0 – 72 AGSB. The well-deserved, and final man of the match was Adam Prichard.

## Thursday 18th October

Our final day in Holland meant we had to say goodbye to our accommodation in Den Haag, meaning boys had a good opportunity to demonstrate their packing skills. Needless to say, some were more efficient at this than others. This did not mean that the trip was over however as we ventured to the Tikibad water park which the boys enjoyed throughly.

Following our late lunch, we had a short trip back to Europort to board the ferry home. Although the arcade and buffet had not changed over the last four days, neither had seemed to lose their appeal.

## Friday 19th October

For our final stint home all were understandably tired although the boys did manage to rally to produce a final sing song as we entered Altrincham. Luckily half term beckoned to gain some much-needed rest.

Mr Birchall



# GCSE AWARDS EVENING

On Wednesday 17th October, AGSB held its annual GCSE Awards Evening – an event organised to celebrate the incredible achievements of Year 12 with their parents and teachers present.

The evening began with a welcome and introduction by the Chair of Governors, which was then followed by a report from the Head Master and a musical interlude, in which Oliver Meldrum (a student in Year 13) performed a beautiful rendition of “Princess Mononoke” by Joe Hisaishi.

Both the Chair of Governors and the Head Master emphasised the important contribution that both parents and teachers have made over the last five years towards the education of the students - from finding a clear pencil case on the day of an exam to teaching a new specification which had even more content than the last.

After the musical interlude, our guest speaker, Dave Guest, was introduced. Mr Guest is a journalist, chief reporter and presenter for the BBC’s North West Tonight and he had a key message that he wanted to share with those who attended the event. It was to never give up on your career. If you want to be a doctor, do everything in your power to become a doctor. If you want to be an actor, do everything you can to become an actor. Mr Guest said that he had decided from a young age that he wanted to be a journalist, following in the footsteps of his father. However, he emphasised that his

career hasn’t always been rosy and that, like life, he has had his fair share of ups and downs. For example, in his first job interview at the BBC he didn’t fully prepare for it – which meant that he couldn’t answer some of the questions to the best of his ability and he didn’t get the job. Nevertheless, he persevered and in a career spanning 35 years, he has won accolades including O2 TV Journalist of the Year and Royal Television Society Award for Best Regional Reporter.

After Mr Guest’s remarks, a scroll was handed to each of the Year 12 students on the stage. A tough task executed with decisiveness and precision thanks to chief usher Mr Cummins. It was then time for the prize giving to commence, where those who performed best in each subject were awarded.

Head Boy – James Mazarelo – then gave his vote of thanks to those attending as well as thanking our esteemed guest – Dave Guest, before those in the hall were ushered to the Stamford Hall for refreshments after a successful and enjoyable evening.

Kyle Panchal-Taylor



## AWARDS

Mathematics – **Daniyal Behiyat**

Economics – **Daniel Haslett**

Biology – **Leo Swarbrick**

Physics – **Yingbo Li**

Latin – **Oliver Huggon**

Chemistry – **James Vallely**

Geology – **Daniyal Behiyat**

Design and Technology – **Sujansai Kommuru**

Computer Studies – **Ahmad Al-Khaddar**

Manufacturing in Technology – **Dexter Harris**

Food and Nutrition – **Matthew Buchalter**

Business Studies – **Sergio Mendez-Allende**

Music – **Tobias Lockyer**

English Literature – **Charles Horlock**

English Language – **Mark Kattakayam**

Geography – **Matthew Best**

French – **Tobias Lockyer**

German – **Benjamin Caley**

Spanish – **Angus Beazley**

Dual Linguist – **Niall Butchart**

Chinese – **Amin Hashmi**

History – **Frederick Whitehurst**

Religion and Philosophy – **Daniel Haslett**

Art – **Yingbo Li**

PE – **James Vallely**

Outstanding Academic Achievement – **Ryan Garnett**





## YEAR 7 BUSHCRAFT TRIP

What do sharp knives, campfires and traps have in common? They were all activities at the Year 7 Bushcraft trip in Cholmondeley Castle. We arrived at school with our large rucksacks, sleeping bags and a spirit of adventure on the morning of our trip. We boarded the 4 coaches eager to leap into all the activities we were yet to enjoy. Every instructor greeted us, on arrival at the camp, with a welcoming smile. The tents we stayed in were like tepees and each slept about 10 people. There was a large yurt in the centre of camp housing a blazing fire. Boys who expected comfortable beds, Wi-Fi and en suite bathrooms were disappointed when they saw the primitive but exciting sight of the camp.

On arrival, we were divided into tribes, in which we needed to come up with a tribe name, song and backstory. The tension between the tribes increased when we were all entered into 'Tribes Got Talent'. We spent the next few days in our tribes doing activities and tasks set by our tribe leaders. In our tribes, each group made a shelter, in which, if we were daring enough, we could spend the night. They were even more basic than the tents with just a sheet of tarpaulin to help us survive the night! We made our shelters out of wood, rope and leaves as well.

Campfires played a huge part in our trip to Bushcraft. Whether it was toasting marshmallows, barbecuing burgers, keeping us warm or just boosting our morale whilst huddled together around the fire. We learnt how to strike flint and steel to get the fire going and then we started burning matchsticks, then fingersticks, thumbsticks and finally wrist sticks. The fire was great fun as we crouched around it, rotating our marshmallow to get a thin, crispy coating and a gooey inside. On the last night, whole salmon, carefully prepared by the teachers, were skewered on sticks and cooked over the campfire. A few brave volunteers even stepped forward to try the raw salmon fish eyes!

Many games were played during our time at Bushcraft. This included hide and seek: we all scampered around the eerie woods desperate to not get seen with our faces covered in camouflage paint. In the dead of night, we played 'capture the lantern': we crawled across the ground, hoping to not be exterminated by the bright beam of the torch.

We took part in many fun and exciting activities during our time at Bushcraft. These included first aid where we learnt the DRSAB response standing for danger, response, shout, airways and breathing. This was vital first aid training, as it taught us how to treat an injured person. We also made different water collection methods, from tying a bag of leaves to a tree to covering a hole with a plastic bag containing a cup. This taught us, that if we ever were in a survival situation, how to get drinkable water. Another of our activities was using a sharp knife to carve a tent peg out of a stick. We were taught that the safest way to do it was to kneel in the 'blood triangle' and make sure that nobody was in your 'blood bubble'. Many of us made a survival bracelet, hand woven out of a tough cord. Another survival technique that we were taught was how to make an animal trap. We learned about different trapping methods and which animals would be good to catch (rabbits, deer etc).

All the Year 7s could only imagine how much planning and preparation had gone into this trip, and how hard all the teachers have worked for us to have a great time at Bushcraft, so a big thanks to them from everyone for making it all happen. The instructors were amazing, showing us many new skills and being so patient and kind. Also, thanks to everyone at the camp for doing everything behind the scenes. The year 7s had an amazing time at the Bushcraft centre and are extremely grateful for this great opportunity.

Thomas Hill



## GUIDE TO YEAR 7S

The first term at AGSB has almost concluded, and for Year Seven students their first year at Altrincham Grammar school has just begun. I am in Year 8 and want to share information that I wish I'd known this time last year.

Getting to school on time. Although an obvious thing to get right, many students fail to fulfil this 'easy' task, have an alarm clock to ensure that you wake up on time. By doing this you ensure that you have time to get changed and most importantly eat breakfast. Many of us travel to school by tram, bus or car. Make sure that you leave your house on time to ensure that you get to school at a suitable time. Remember you may have to factor in having to see teachers before school has started? Or simply putting your ingredients into the Food and Nutrition room takes longer than expected.

Practice at tying your tie. So many times, we have been in the situation when after P.E we have a sudden mind blank and, unfortunately, fail to remember how to knot our tie. This is also important as it plays an essential part in school uniform, along with tucking your shirt in and wearing your blazer, this ensures that you take pride in your appearance. Many intelligent people undo it enough to pop over their head and then back on afterwards. Genius!

Make sure that you participate in an extra-curricular activity. It does not only improve your knowledge or your sporting skills. It is also a great social activity where you are doing something you like and an opportunity to make new friends. Ensure that you have a reasonable sized, strong, unique bag. Check that you have your name on the outside of your bag or put a keyring or a ribbon on it. By doing this you know that this is your bag, also you won't have to waste half your break in the bag-room!

Always top up your Sodexo card. By doing this you can save the hassle of an IOU and enjoy your break or spend it at an extra-curricular activity.

These are top tips for life at AGSB. Remember though, if you are unsure of what you are meant to be doing then do not hesitate to ask someone.

Aiyush Gupta





# ENTERPRISE DAY

On 13th July 2018, the Year 10 Enterprise Day took place to teach the year group all about the world of business and how to effectively work as a team to design a useful product. Being the 70th anniversary of the NHS, the theme for the product was healthcare.

After being split into teams, we partook in a series of teambuilding activities to improve and strengthen relationships with our peers so that we could work better as a team. They involved building bridges and towers out of straws as well as logical puzzles that we had to solve together. We then assigned roles within our groups such as 'Team Leader', 'Finance Manager' and 'Marketing Manager' so that we could split up responsibilities and work more efficiently.

Then we started the main task of the day: designing a product that could be used within the healthcare industry to improve the lives of people. We went through a process like that of real life entrepreneurs, including brainstorming, analysis of the market and competitor analysis.

In order to fund our development and advertising, we had to raise money from a variety of sources, each with advantages and disadvantages. One option was a government grant which provided little money but with no interest to pay. Another was a loan shark who offered fast access to cash but with very high interest rates.

At the end of the day, every team prepared a short advertisement and pitch that would be presented in front of the entire year group as well as the judges.

Everyone had a great time and at the end of the day we had learnt some valuable enterprise skills such as teamwork, analysis skills and the ability to take initiative and invent creative solutions. There were also prizes that were given out to the best team in each activity and the overall winners won a small football each.

Awais Khawaja

## CORRIDORS, CROWDS, AND COMMENDATIONS

A look back at my first week at AGSB.

Secondary school. New teachers, people, timetable and classrooms. The morning of the first day of school, after months of planning and preparation, was finally here. First day and first time on the train, sticking out like a sore thumb in between the businessmen and women and the older pupils. I arrived at the school gates and gawped at the miles of red brick which housed the classrooms where I would spend my next 5 or more years. Wow, I couldn't believe I was finally here! I could immediately recognise the Year 7 boys as they all looked like lost sheep with well-coiffed hair and shiny shoes. Eventually, after what felt like an age, the flock was guided by suited sixth formers to the Coleman Hall, where we were welcomed by Mr Wright and many other teachers. It was daunting, as there are more people in Year 7 than there were in my entire primary school!

One of the biggest challenges of starting a new school is fitting in and remembering everyone's names. Frau Chapman, our German teacher, seemed to have an excellent method: the 'go-round-the-class-and-memorise-everyone's-

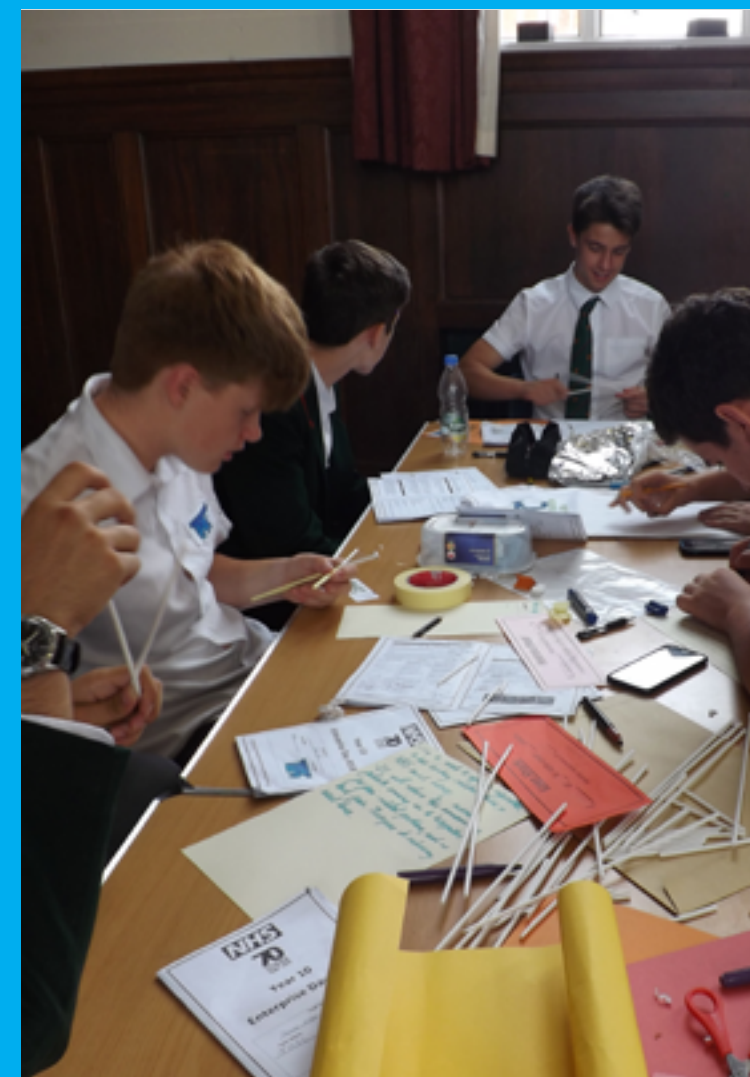
names-technique'. I was very impressed. After marching on the spot whilst chanting the German alphabet, Frau Chapman tested us on our new knowledge. Previously unfamiliar with the term 'commendation', we soon discovered that it is the secondary school equivalent of a gold star.

Travelling between lessons in the corridors was overwhelming: I felt like I was a piece of driftwood being carried along on a sea of green blazers, at risk of washing up on the wrong beach! Older boys, towering over me, stared curiously at my bewildered face.

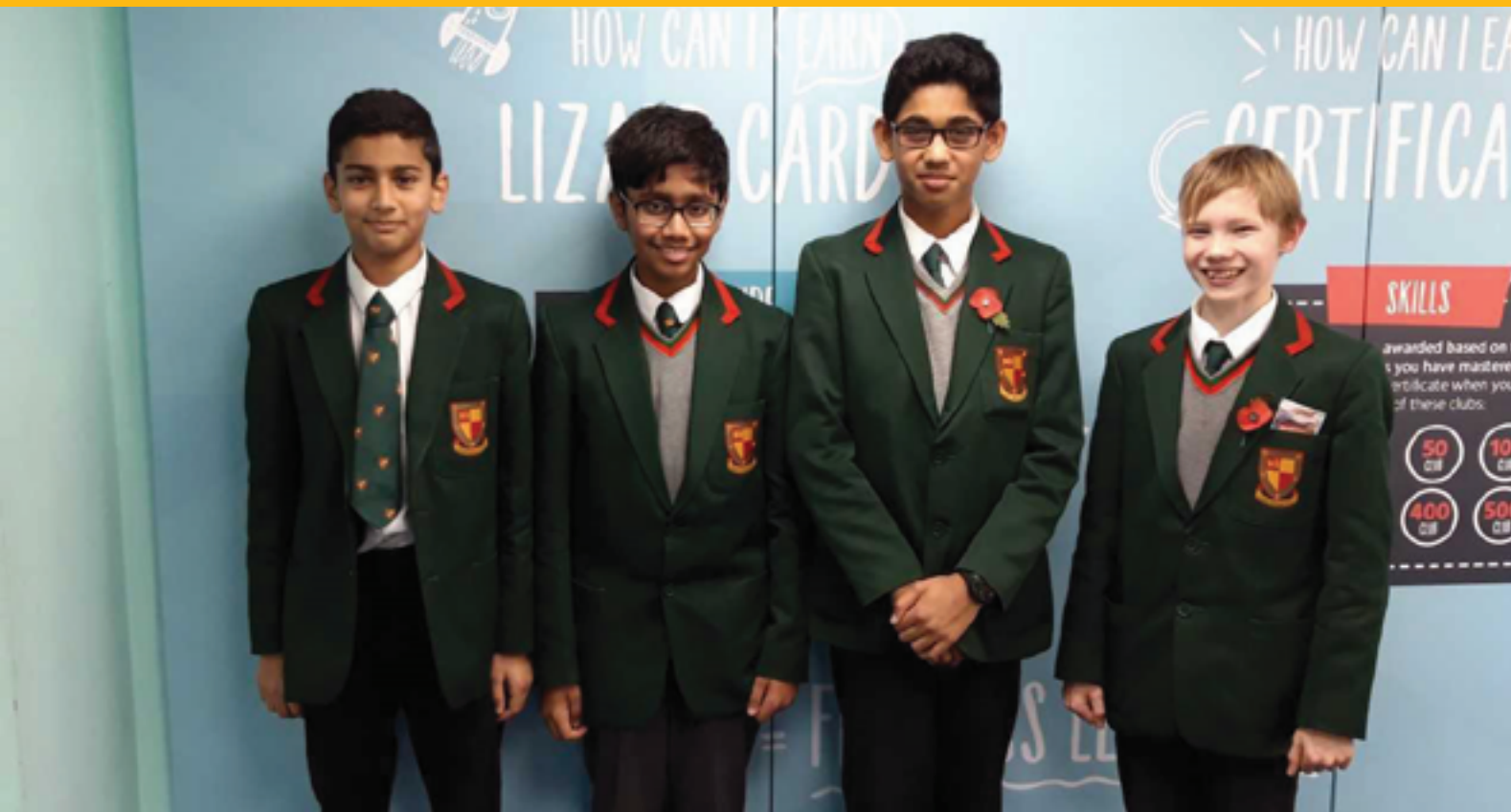
At lunchtime, a stampede of ravenous boys descended on the canteen, squashing up in the queue like sardines in a tin to prevent older pupils from pushing in. We were all keen to sample the new AGSB cuisine.

I am relieved that my first day at secondary school went smoothly and that I still have another seven years of opportunities to enjoy.

Thomas Hill







# YOUNG MATHEMATICIANS' AWARD

On Thursday 8th November, I and three other Year 8's led by Mrs Chancellor attended the Young Mathematicians' Award challenge, held in the Explore Learning centre on Washway Road, Sale. We left school at 11:15 and went via minibus to the centre where the challenge would be held. The actual challenge began at 12:30, however before that we had lunch while pondering over a maths problem we were set - to get us started - and our team had high hopes for the challenges to come.

The teams with us in the challenge were Stretford Grammar and Sale Grammar School, both tough teams to beat. The questions we encountered were based all upon dice; one of them was trying to make the top part of four die equal twelve while all the adjacent sides of each dice touching each other were the same. We had four questions of this type, each increasing in difficulty as we moved along. The questions were generally focused on finding systematic ways to find all the answers and making sure we didn't have any repeated answers. We had an hour in which to complete all of them, and we just finished a minute before the time was up. After this, we had to create a presentation on which we were going to be judged later.

We planned for five minutes and we were all assigned one question and had to explain our methods and how we systematically solved the problem. We would be marked on our answers and how we worked well as a team, and I think we did both very well. When we completed this we joined the rest of the schools and, one by one, teams were sent in front of the judges to present. During the time we waited, we had pictures taken, we were given lizard cards and we discussed

the questions with the other high schools. However, soon the fun was over, and we left the centre and took the minibus back to school, arriving at 2:45. A couple of days later Mrs Chancellor, informed us we had won and were to enter the second round in December, when the challenge will become more competitive. Overall, the maths challenge was a great experience for us and we hope to do well in the second round.

Ibrahim Jamal



# SIXTH FORM MATHS CHALLENGE

One predictably overcast Tuesday, 5 year 13s and Miss Potter went to Manchester University for a day of mathematics. We sat in tables of four with pupils from other schools and were initially given a single question - more were to come as we answered them correctly. This was followed by a presentation on the various mathematics admissions tests that universities look for: the MAT, STEP, TMUA and AEA papers are some of the hardest papers that still only use A level maths techniques. We were then given another set of questions to keep us occupied for another hour, after which a postdoc university student tried his hand at teaching us university algebra. Now he knows how his own professors feel - and we have a better idea of what to expect at university.

Here is a selection of questions we worked through:

- 1) How many zeroes are at the end of 100!?
- 2) Take a 2-digit number, then reverse its digits and add the two numbers together. How many numbers are there that will make a prime number from this process?
- 3) Find the 4 pairs of solutions to  $x^2 - y^2 = 105$ .

David Rosof-Williams





# GEOGRAPHY ANCOATS TRIP

The GCSE Geographers of Year 11 went on two trips across two consecutive (and freezing) days in October, studying first human and then physical geography as part of our GCSE course. The first day (where we studied human geography) was spent in Ancoats where we looked at the effects of regeneration and urbanisation on the inner city; split into groups, we explored the area and compiled data we would later use in the classroom. What we learnt was certainly interesting, but the highlight was when we were let loose in the Arndale centre to buy our lunch- although it did bring into question the time management of some.

The second day we made our way to Snowdonia for our physical geography research where we studied the coursing river of Afon Peris. We were again split up into groups and

moved our way down the river measuring its width, depth and velocity. Despite the cold and (at times) wet weather the day did have some highlights, the different groups had to make a video tutorial for our class. This was relatively easy for my group as we only had to explain how to count 100 paces and find a good spot to measure the river, but we still had some fun while making it – thanks in part to the slippery conditions proving an issue for us while we hiked.

Overall the two days were interesting while still being good fun for all the students involved.

Matthew Curry

# GEOLOGY TRIP

On Wednesday 3rd September, a group of Year 11 students set off on a Geology trip to the beautiful island of Anglesey in northwest Wales. They had embarked on a trip to learn more about the geological features of the world around us and to gain a better understanding of real-life Geology.

Throughout the three day trip, the students had an amazing time, exploring the coasts of the island and studying the amazing rocks and features that lie there. There were some amazing sights and the students definitely learnt a great amount about the subject throughout the journey. It

is important to go on trips like these so that students can realise the way that the real world works and learn in a more practical and enjoyable environment.

Ewan Barrett (Year 11) – “Real life Geology is very different from the theoretical lessons so it’s important to understand how it actually works.”

Awais Khawaja





# MACBETH THEATRE TRIP

Something wicked this way comes...

In early October, fifty pupils immersed themselves in the world of eleventh century Scotland as we followed the Macbeths in their ruinous crusade for power and glory.

The first production was performed at the Lowry in Salford; we saw dystopian stage design and costuming choices bring the chaos of the play into a new age. The witches were decked in transparent trench-coats and climbed precarious tree-like structures to great visual effect. This was a particularly grisly retelling, with two on-stage beheadings, a blood stained Lady Macbeth and the dazed ghost of Lady Macduff carrying her from their resting place in plastic bags to the final battle scene.

The second production was performed at the Waterside in Sale. This was an enjoyably off-the-wall rendition of the play, performed by just two actors throughout who made superb use of a variety of unpredictable props including a French horn,

a mannequin and a camping stove. This was fast paced and often dizzying in its delirium; the actors switched impressively between dramatic soliloquising and a fourth-wall-breaking informality with the audience. Several pupils had the chance to participate in the famed banquet scene, really bringing that pivotal moment of the play to life.

Huge thanks to the staff from the English department who made these trips possible and to the pupils who attended for their superb behaviour and willingness to participate!

Emma Chapman



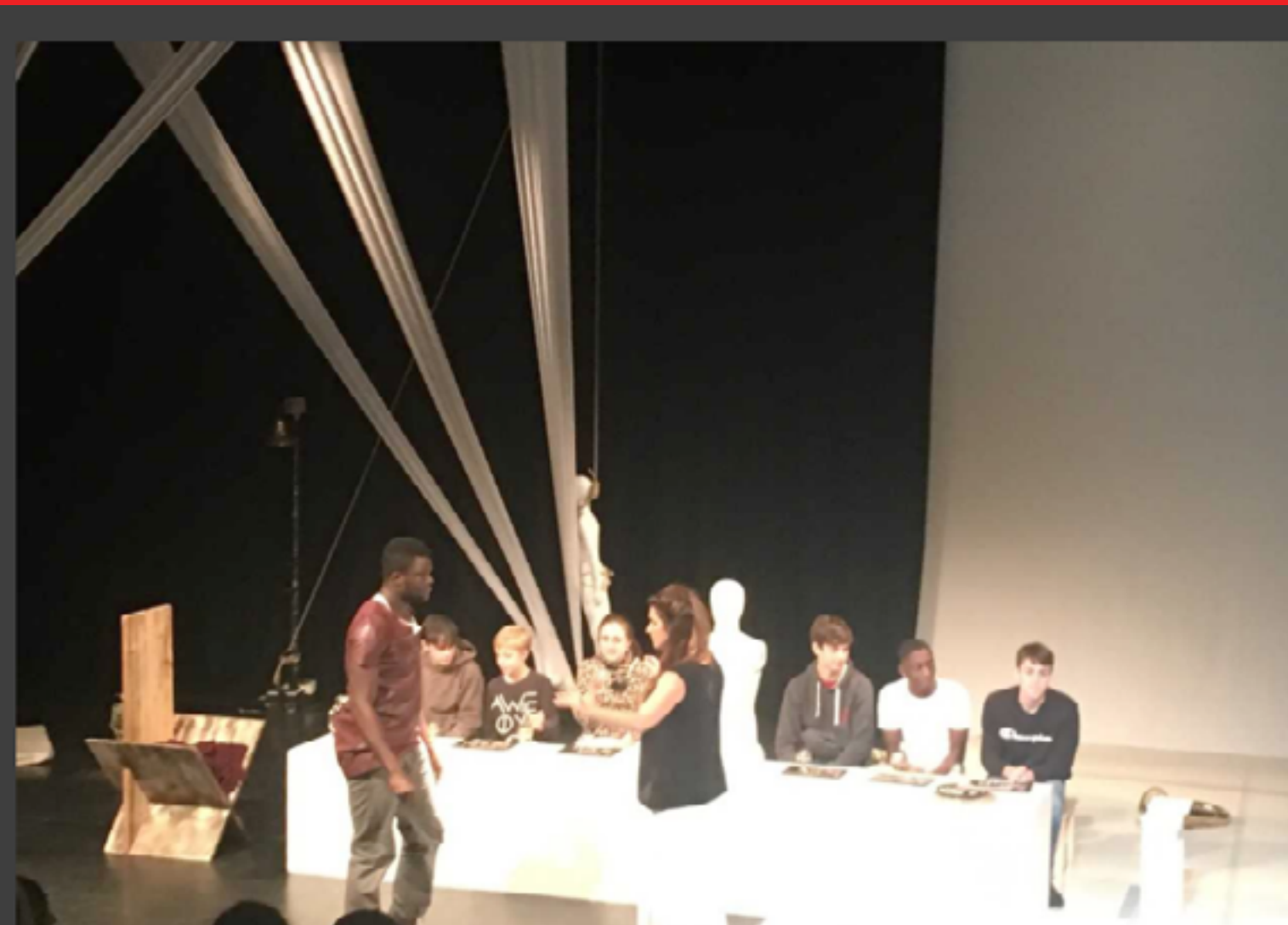
# NATIONAL POETRY DAY

When the world changes, it is often the poetry or songs we remember - even more than the political figures or legal changes that may take place. Shelley's "Masque of Anarchy" with its rallying cry of, "ye are the many, they are the few" is one of those poetic earworms that simply does not go away. Maya Angelou's inspirational poem "Still I Rise" tells us more about the journey of black Americans than many textbooks can muster: "You may write me down in history/With your bitter, twisted lies/You may trod me in the very dirt/But still, like dust, I'll rise!". "Free Nelson Mandela!" by the Special AKA arguably did more to promote the battle against apartheid in the West than any number of committee meetings or leaflets.

The power of positive change was the theme of 2018's National Poetry Week and we celebrated the magic of verse with a series of assemblies for all year groups, sharing stirring poems and hearing why students and teachers love poetry. 'Thought for the Week' asked us to reflect on song lyrics, such as Michael Jackson's "Man in the Mirror" - a song-poem that focuses on what one individual can do to change the world, at the same time as being a poem you can dance to.

The doors and walls of the school were festooned with famous poems and - hopefully - a spirit of lyricism and inspiration filled the air.

Martin Davies





# THE MODEL UNITED NATIONS

MUN is a society that convenes every Tuesday lunchtime in C6 for Year 10 and above. We discuss a wide variety of economic, humanitarian and geopolitical issues that concern the international community.

Most students have a point of view that they'd like to express and each has their own specific style of delivery. MUN gives a platform for those students to talk about something that concerns them, while helping each person develop their personality. Public Speaking is one of people's greatest fears, however, MUN serves as a great starting point, where you won't be judged and will feel confident enough to start speaking for yourself, and eventually have the courage to present a resolution. Debating skills come in handy in MUN, where you may wish to question the speaker about their point of view or speak against a resolution put forward by someone else. The leaders at MUN will strive to help you improve; from correcting your resolutions to helping you form a well-articulated response, which becomes complementary to school life, especially in subjects such as English Language and Literature, History, Geography, Government and Politics and many more.

MUN also comes with opportunities outside of school, with regular conferences at other schools throughout the year. Our school often send delegations (groups) to conferences held at Cheadle Hulme School, Manchester High School for Girls, Stockport Grammar School and Withington Girls

School, allowing students to increase their experience. In each conference, delegations are given different countries to represent and students will be assigned to a committee such as Human Rights, Health, Technology Youth, Security and many more, this allows students with all sorts of interests to take part in the conference. A key skill in the conferences is understanding different points of view, as you'd have to speak on behalf of a country whose views may not necessarily be in line with your own, which is useful in post-18 life, and a skill looked for by many universities for many subjects. In the conferences, there are many opportunities to receive awards. In our last conference at Cheadle Hulme School, representing Greece and Guatemala, both delegations received a 6 commendations, including one outstanding delegate from the Guatemalan Delegation, won by Mathew Curry from Year 11.

MUN is also a great platform to express your personality, with many very different characters taking part. Many jokes are made in the sessions and in the conferences, giving a very relaxed and welcoming environment for anyone, all while teaching life skills, from being able to understand other points of view, debating, speaking, teamwork, reasoning and articulating, writing and many more. Getting involved is as simple as turning up every Tuesday lunchtime in C6.

Mohammed Jafar

# MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING



On Thursday 27th September the GCSE Food Tech students in Year 10, accompanied by Mrs. Gordon, made a wide selection of cakes to sell in the staff room at break time for Macmillan Cancer Support. A plethora of different sweet treats were made; from cupcakes to brownies, there was no lack of variety in the baked foods. The vegan banana cake made by Dominic Maye was a hit along with Sid Surya's Black Forest Gateau. After a short conversation with Jude Wright he said, "It was great fun to bake all the cakes and to raise money for a great cause."

The Headmaster, Mr. Wright, said "the cakes looked spectacular but unfortunately, he didn't have much of a sweet tooth himself!" The Food and Nutrition department was able to raise a staggering £240.40. Congratulations to everyone involved and the staff for their generous donations.

James Legg and George Thornicroft





# ONE MILE BAKERY

To aid both the Year 11 and Year 10 GCSE food preparation and nutrition groups, Mrs King invited the owner of the One Mile Bakery in Hale to do a session to help us with our bread making skills. As part of our coursework we have to make three dishes, all with very high skills involved. Bread-making is classed as high skill especially if you shape the dough to give it a high quality finish.

During the session we made a loaf of bread. We shaped it into a dough called a Winston dough. Throughout the session the chef gave us some very useful tips to help us achieve the very top level when making bread.



He showed us how to knead properly to develop the most amount of gluten to allow the bread to rise properly. He also told us to weigh the water so the correct amounts of ingredients could be used the dough was neither too wet nor too dry.

He showed us how to shape the dough into a Winston dough and that even if the dough is wet if you keep kneading it without adding too much flour it becomes drier.

<https://www.onemilebakery.com/hale/>

Tom Wallis



# GCSE FOOD COURSE

The 2018 GCSEs set a new standard with the introduction of the 9-1 grading scheme and many changes to the form of examination, most noticeably the removal of coursework in the majority of subjects. Of course, in a subject like Food and Nutrition, this wasn't exactly the case however the increase in theory examination (making the written exam worth 50% of the total grade, up from 40% in the old style), and the increase in required skill and depth of scientific knowledge in terms of practical assessments (Non-Examination Assessments) made it a big change for the department.

In a two-year course, we had a lot to cover and so dedication and hard work was required. The new style NEAs both took place in Year 11, consisting of a 2000-word write-up to detail 10 hours of work including 3 investigations. The brief chosen for us was titled "Investigate the [...] properties of eggs and other ingredients when making meringue". Although this did mean getting rid of lots of meringues (by eating of course), this was only rewarded after hours of dedicated effort. Some of the tests we carried out included testing different effects on the viscosity of an egg foam and the best incorporation time of sugar.

For our second practical assessment, we had to create a menu consisting of 3-dishes utilizing a wide range of skills. This time we were able to choose which title we completed from a list of 3. Whether we were imagining ourselves in Europe, crafting traditional cuisine of Italy or France, or attempting to sneak vegetables into children's meals, our minds were focused on high skill and creativity to secure top marks. Throughout the 20 hours, students researched into their target market and

typical dishes which led to the creation dishes ranging from brulée lemon tarte to hand-shaped and filled tortellini. 20 pages later of research, nutritional analysis, sensory testing and evaluation, the assessments were handed in and a huge weight was lifted off our shoulders.

Although there was a lot to do, hard work didn't go unnoticed and overall, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the course. We had so much fun in our Friday lunchtime revision sessions and in our packed timetables, Food lessons felt like a breath of fresh air, with a smaller class size and more active work. The subject is really rewarding in the fact that you can see (and taste) the product of your hard work, as opposed to a number on a piece of paper. I also really loved the creative freedom in researching and selecting the dishes I made. From somebody who was a little hesitant to pick Food and Nutrition as a GCSE option, I know that I would have been regretful if I hadn't and so I advise anybody who is currently deciding, and who has a passion for the subject to choose it too!

Matthew Bulchater





# MENTAL HEALTH

Suicide is the most likely cause of death for young men in the UK. Last year, more than 6000 young men and women took their own lives – with 75% of the total being men. 34% of men surveyed about mental health said that they were constantly stressed and 40% of men said that they would not take time off work due to mental health issues as their employer would look at them differently. In a report by the Telegraph, research suggests that 1 in 3 teenagers, aged 15 to 18, struggle with their mental health or emotional well-being issues.

In an age of endless opportunities, a world revolutionised by the web, why do mental health problems have such prevalence today? Is it partially the effect of the overly linear education system? Or the rise of social media where gaining likes is often 'more important' than enjoying life? Or the pressure that society imposes, taking us down a narrow path with only one route to the end? Or could it be a combination of all these different problems mixed with the stigma surrounding mental health – where the media portrays it as a weakness?

Andy Caress came into AGSB to speak to Year 12 about mental health, the stigma surrounding it and how we can overcome the stigma. He stated that the associations made by society towards the term 'Mental Health' is where the problems all start. When many people think of the term 'Mental Health', depression, anxiety and suicide are all things that come to mind. However, 'Mental Health' indicates the sense of well-being and the state at which a person can cope with the stresses of normal life. Why does the society we live in just focus on the negatives? He also highlighted the problems with regards to the funding that mental health receives from the NHS budget. With many young people being affected by mental health issues, it is quite troubling to see that less than 1% of the NHS budget is spent on mental health.

In reaction to this, events have been organised across the UK to help spread awareness for mental health, e.g. Movember is now focused on spreading awareness for the mental health and well-being of men. One of the biggest issues surrounding the subject of mental health is the prioritisation of other areas. However, feeling empty and down is not normal and we must now work towards becoming a society where it is



normal for people to talk about how they are feeling without the worry of being judged.

Depression can affect anyone; one minute you may feel on top of the world and the next you may feel hatred towards yourself. Learning the warning signs for depression is extremely important, not just to keep an eye on yourself, but also to keep an eye on those that are close to you.

## The warning signs –

Hopelessness, Guilt, Suicidal Thoughts, Insomnia, Empty Mood, Tearfulness, Making Decisions is a Difficulty

If you/someone close to you are/is feeling like this then it is the coping strategies that you use that are pivotal. Mr Caress told his personal story of his mental health problems. He said that in his first year of teaching, he broke down and began to self-harm. He had thought that by causing himself pain he could cope. In hindsight, though, he stressed that this just worsened how he was feeling and that he would be in a better place now if he had looked after himself at an earlier stage.

Often, those who have been through depression feel as if they are a burden to those that are close to them and feel that if they were no longer around, the lives of these people would be better.

"People who die by suicide don't want to end their lives they want to end their pain"

However, this is far from the truth and it is the self-care, the seeking of professional support and the action of speaking to those closest to you that will aid your recovery. Mr Caress emphasised that he was still on his personal road to recovery and that even though the journey is long, life does get better.

Kyle Panchal-Taylor

# ALLERGIES? NOT ME

One might be aware of that an allergy can be painful and can ultimately result in asthma at a later age. There are numerous symptoms such as skin rashes. Sometimes allergies can be fatal. However, in the UK all food products are labelled with each ingredient, even if they are only traces. The common allergens, such as: milk, egg and soy are labelled in bold, however that wasn't true recently.

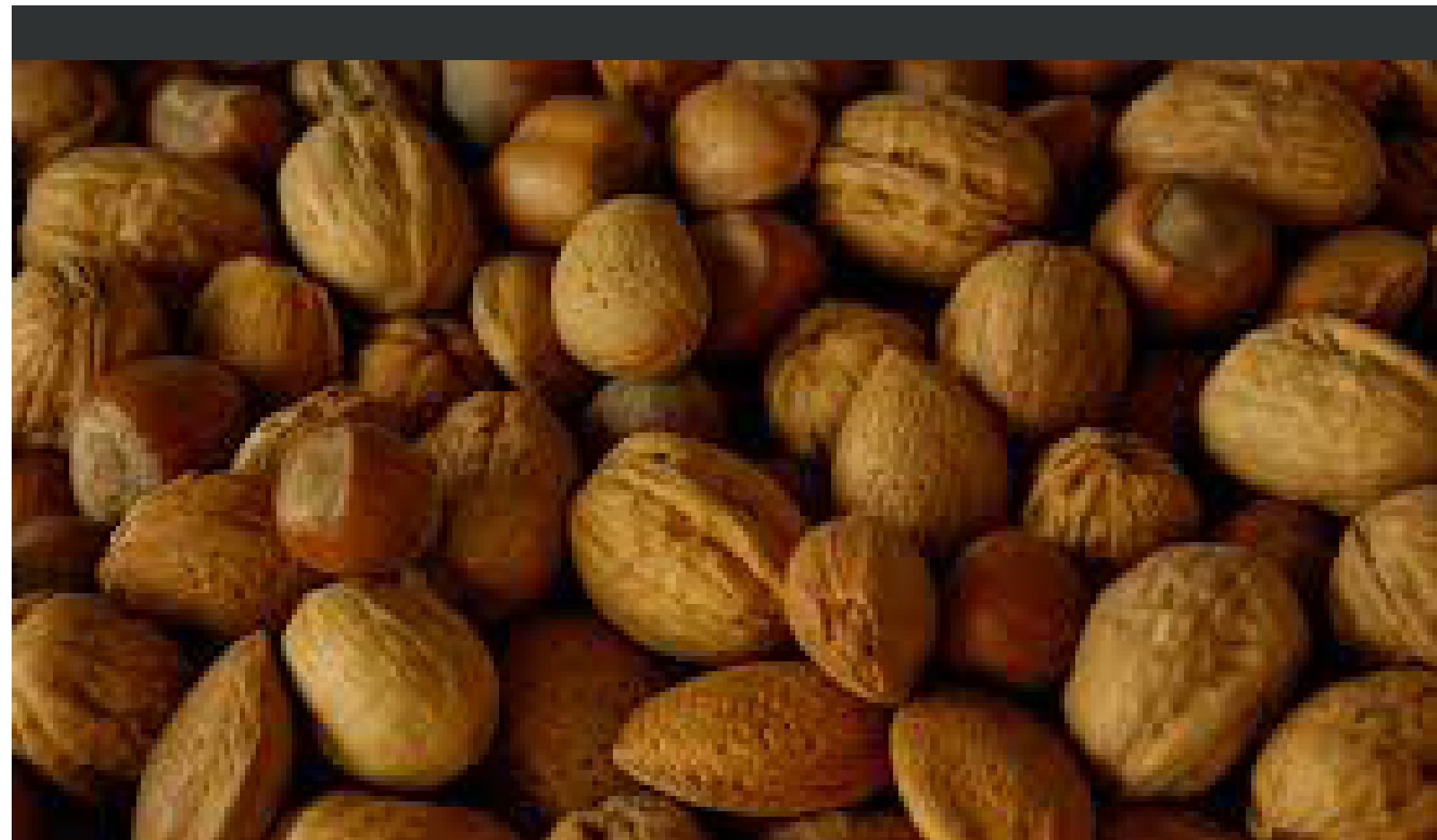
It was in an unfortunate incident that a fifteen-year-old girl died after having a severe allergic reaction to sesame seed. This was simply due to a baguette not being labelled to show traces of sesame seeds as they were only in the dough. However, the question is why are allergies becoming so common?

In America there was an eighteen percent increase in children with allergies between the years 1997 and 2007. In addition to this, it has been noticed that there has been an increase in allergic diseases post industrialisation. There is also a higher incidence of allergic diseases in developed countries.

It is believed that as we are making a shift to a more sterile world, we are changing the direction of our immune response. In order to develop, the immune system must receive stimulation for the development of regulatory T cells. Otherwise it will be more susceptible to autoimmune diseases and allergic diseases due to the insufficient response of T helper cells. Research has also shown that the colonisation of flora is vital to a balanced immune system. It may be a time when science has swung too far the other way. As we sterilise the environment: we operate outside our designed parameters.

It is advised that we clean surfaces with the regular soap and water. Cleaning with bleach kills all the micro-organisms that are present; most of those micro-organisms are non-pathogenic and can therefore prevent any illness, allergies or inflammatory diseases.

Anish Das





# THE IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALISM

In the modern age, the term 'fake news' has entered into the public's mind. While this term was originally used to describe false or inaccurate stories spread by social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, this term is being increasingly used to attack journalists and their stories. Such attacks weaken the public's trust in the news and journalism itself. The rhetoric against journalism has been increasing with even the President of the United States of America describing journalists as the 'enemy of the people' and 'very dangerous and sick'.

The main importance of journalism is to convey information. Journalism supports the modern democratic society, bringing transparency into society and makes sure that the public is aware of what is going on. Journalism sheds light on the darkest truths and decisions made by governments. Without journalism, the public will not know what is going on in their country or have a say in it, and doesn't this undermine democracy itself?

Jamal Khashoggi, a journalist who wrote monthly columns about the Saudi Arabian government, was brutally killed on the 2nd October 2018. For decades, Khashoggi was close to the Saudi Arabian government and served as an advisor. In 2017, Khashoggi fell out of favour with the government and was 'self-exiled' to the USA. Here he wrote articles criticising

the Saudi Arabian government saying 'what the Arab world needs most is free expression'.

With the increasingly aggressive behaviour towards journalists and the Khashoggi case in mind, it is important to remember journalists and freedom of speech play a key role in a modern democracy. It is important to respect journalism and what it achieves, even when the information that the journalist provides is uncomfortable for a particular government or ruler to hear.

An attack on journalism is an attack on democracy itself.

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**“AN ATTACK ON  
JOURNALISM IS AN  
ATTACK ON DEMOCRACY  
ITSELF”**





## SHINE REWARDS

On Monday 22nd October, I went down to London with my family and some friends to enjoy the half term, and to meet Dr. Simon Heffer, as a reward for winning Journalist of the Year and Best Feature. I was going to have a one to one session with him for an hour.

I left Wilmslow Train Station at 9:30am to travel to Euston, London with my family and some friends and arrived at around 12pm. We walked over to our hotel; an incredible looking building with a view of the London Eye and the Thames. We then went for a quick lunch, and then wandered off to the Natural Science Museum. It was spectacular! The displays were interesting and informative, and I left with a massive smile on my face. My sister, on the other hand, was less than pleased... We went out for dinner at The Rainforest Café and walked to the hotel for a well-earned rest.

The next day, I was ecstatic. I was anxious but ready at the same time, and I couldn't have felt happier with myself for being able to get to the stage I was at. My family and our friends got to Stationers' Hall early, so we were given a tour (for me, it was just a simple refresher, of course) and everyone was blown away with the sheer magnitude of the building's history and how incredible it looked.

Then, the big moment came, and not a moment too soon! I was introduced to Dr. Heffer and we got down to business immediately. We started talking about current affairs, interests, my articles, his articles; it was fantastic and I learnt stuff that will stay with me for the rest of my writing career. Dr. Heffer critiqued my work, and gave me feedback that will, again, be remembered for a very long time. Overall, the weekend on a whole was brilliant and an experience I won't forget!

G Thornicroft



## MITHYLAN : MUSIC MAESTRO

Mithylan is a student in year 13 who has been playing the violin for eleven years. Having already surpassed the standard music grades with high marks, he decided to get a diploma over the summer holidays. The diploma is one of the most prestigious musical awards one could obtain as there is a rigorous process for it to be awarded. To obtain a diploma, he had to play a repertoire of music that had a duration of thirty minutes. After Mithylan had showcased his playing, he was scrutinized by an examiner, who could have awarded Mithylan a maximum of fifty marks; twenty of those were formulated from the overall performance, whilst the other thirty were accumulated from the individual pieces. Mithylan managed to score an excellent score of 43/50, which is an unbelievable score given the difficulty of the exam.

As well as having a diploma, Mithylan has also been a part of the Hallé Youth Orchestra for three years. During his time playing with the renowned Orchestra, Mithylan has been able to play at some of the biggest venues, such as the Bridgewater hall, and the Youth Orchestra has also been able to go on tour to Lake Garda, one of the most serene places in Europe. One of his most memorable experiences whilst being a part of the Orchestra was having the opportunity to play in a concert alongside the Hallé Orchestra.

After Sixth Form, Mithylan is hoping to continue his passion and play in university orchestras and further improve his technique. His passion for music can be paralleled with some of the most acclaimed musicians and it warrants a feature in the school's magazine.

Atputhan Kuralarasu





# THE HAT

When I created this piece, I went in with the intention of not just making a phoney helmet that everyone else was making. I wasn't going to make a school project that I'd bin when I came home. I was going to make art. True art. I feel nowadays, schools make children do "art" for the sake of it. Forcing children to be creative, at least in my opinion takes away the liberation that art and music is intended to produce. It's become another boring subject that we must learn like Maths or English, art isn't expressing yourself anymore with a pencil and paper, music isn't an old romantic gesture of a boy in a backyard with a guitar, they've become industrialised and money making.

Ever since I started the subject from a young age, I was repeatedly taught that there wasn't any "right or wrong" in art. Well, considering the fact my most recent piece of work only got a 4, it clearly shows that there is in fact, a right and wrong.  $1+1=2$  and it's the same for art. There is a formula for success, if you change the formula, decide to be innovative or clever, the iron fist of The Man comes down and upon you and forces you to change. They are trying to chisel us into circles, something that is impossible. What do I mean by this? Read on. Enough of my own babbling, I think it's time for me to present The Hat. Drawing inspiration from the old art works of Leonardo Di Caprio and Pablo Picasso I made a minimalistic hat out of the stylistic aesthetical design of Western Essentialist art. It was a simple piece of card stuck onto the base, all painted white with a black outline near the base. But, simply, it wasn't about how it looked, but what it represents, because you see, The Hat isn't finished just yet. It shall have smiley faces drawn on it by the inhabitants of Manchester when I go there during summer.

What is the point of these smiley faces, I hear you ask? It's to show that there is, still in fact, true art left in this rotten world of ours. It's to show the unity of the people of Manchester,

through culture, through race, through ideologies and beliefs to come together to show the one human emotion that we all possess, happiness. But most importantly, it's meant to show that there is no  $1+1=2$  in art. Art can be made through a variety of things but forcing it out of people will never work.

This is why the shape of my hat is a square, not a traditional circle or oval. Circles are perfect shapes, geometrically and physically, they're a nice shape to look at and so are very often implemented into most things we do. Rectangles on the other hand are blunt and sharp, not very pretty to look at. The idea is that if you cut down a rectangle enough and properly it could become a circle but that's in theory.

In reality what truly happens is you cut down something, chopping off the talent and it's uniqueness, hoping for it to fit your ideology of what is perfect and you are left with a poor hack job of what you came in for. As you see, it is impossible to cut a rectangle into a circle, at least perfectly. What ends up happening is that you take away so much off the original thing and what is left isn't even what you want. But you keep going as you know you can make it perfect. But it was already perfect. The rectangle already has a circle inside it, you can try as hard as you want but you can never really reach it. Leaving it as a rectangle lets the perfect shape stay inside the imperfect shape.

There is always perfection inside imperfection, you can never reach it but you know it's there. This is the ideology used by religions and societies all over the world, as I found in my research. I do every part of The Hat deliberately but I can't claim credit. I basically stole some of the main parts of the hat, that make it so unique, from a culture that I found while making this piece of art.

Wurdaan Kashif



# BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

Recently, I made an application to join a film making academy course for 16-19 year olds with the British Film Institute (BFI), held at HOME, a cultural theatre and cinema organisation in central Manchester. As part of my application, I created a short film to demonstrate my existing abilities as a film maker. The film is called 'The Garage' and centres around a teenager taking refuge in a garage while trying to remain hidden from a mysterious invading force. It shows what we might have to do to cope in difficult situations such as this, and demonstrates the effect that isolation could have on a person.

Creating the film was quite difficult as there was just one week to go from concept to a developed plan, prepare, shoot and edit the film before the application deadline. It therefore had to be kept as simple as possible, meaning that I had to come up with something that could work with limited time, locations, props and actors. There was then less than half a day in total where my friend was available to act in it, making the whole process very tight on time.

However, while the final film won't quite be competing with Spielberg, even with its Hollywood budget of... nothing, I was very happy with the end result. Editing the sound was what I found most difficult and so part of what I wanted to gain from the BFI course was to learn how to improve in this area. Fortunately, the film, along with the rest of my application was successful, and I received a phone call to say that I had been selected from 63 applications as one of the 18 participants for the 2018 BFI Academy. The news came as both a shock and delight, after having waited a few days for a response, with the course then beginning the following week.

As a part of the two month course, which takes place on Wednesdays, Saturdays and during October half term, there is the chance to learn about both theoretical and practical film making, as well as writing, shooting and editing our own film as a part of the course. The experience has been amazing so far, and the knowledge gained from industry professionals is invaluable. We shot our film on location in Manchester over half term, using ridiculously expensive equipment and being able to work on the project with a group of like-minded people of the same age was absolutely incredible. I look forward to continuing with the course and would fully recommend it to anyone who is considering a career in film in the future.

If you wish to watch my film 'The Garage', you can find it on YouTube using the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEDjICKXdJo&t=43s>

Wiliam Aloul





# THANKFUL POPPIES

I wanted to create a visual display of Remembrance around the Reception area of the school to commemorate 100 years since the end of WW1.

After seeing the 2014 display at The Tower of London, and then in the following years how others interpreted the idea on a much smaller scale, I felt inspired and confident that I could create a display that showed remembrance and gratitude. However, I wanted something students and colleagues could feel connected to; so the idea grew to having "thankful poppies" – where, for a small donation to The Royal British Legion, we could write personal messages on a poppy. The poppies were then fastened to fixings that allowed them to hang from the ceiling in Reception where they gently swayed as school life bustled around them.

For me this was an opportunity to dedicate a poppy to my Great Grandfather – Private William Church who was killed in action on 16th November 1916. My birthday is the same date as his death and because of this I feel a great connection to him. I hope the students who participated felt it a proud and rewarding opportunity for them to express their thanks and remembrance.

I must say a huge thank you to Mrs Williamson (Sixth Form Officer) and James Mazarelo (Head Boy) and his team of Year 13 students who helped tremendously in the distribution and collection of poppies. Also to all those who participated – the messages on the poppies were heart-warming and truly honoured our war heroes.

Sophie Embleton

## 14-18NOW

As part of our commemorations into the First World War, Year 9 took part in an art and film workshop looking at the personal relationships of soldiers in war. The students produced a series of images that can be seen here. The workshop was in conjunction with 14-18NOW. These were the people who were responsible for the poppy installation at tower bridge a few years ago. This year the organisation have been working with Peter Jackson (Lord of the Rings Director) to create footage from the war. Further information can be found in the link here

<https://www.1418now.org.uk/news/new-film-peter-jackson/>

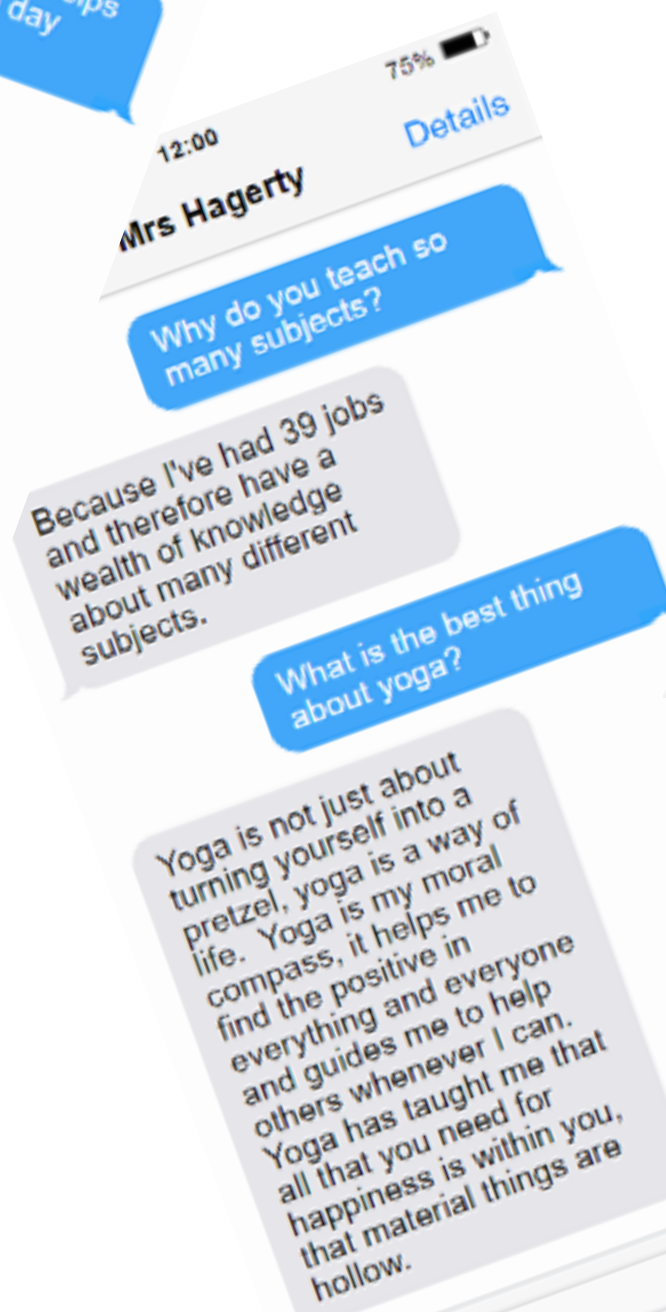
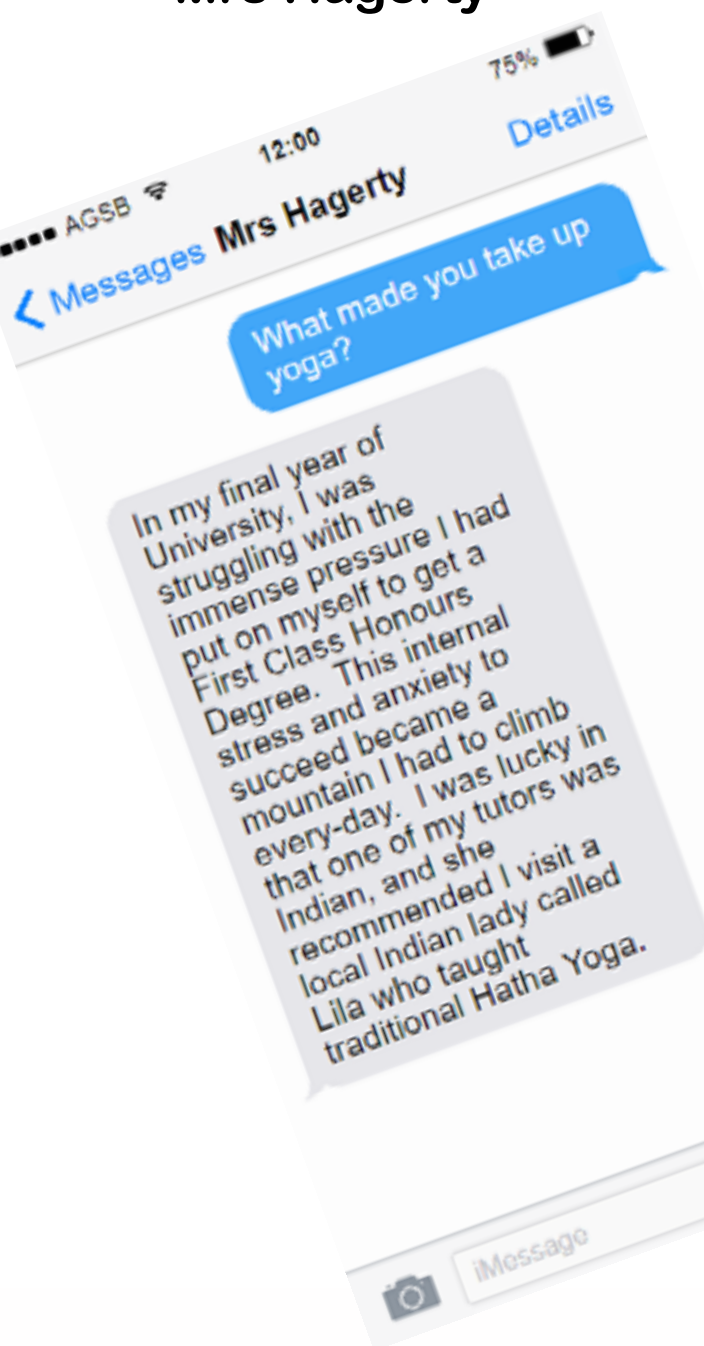
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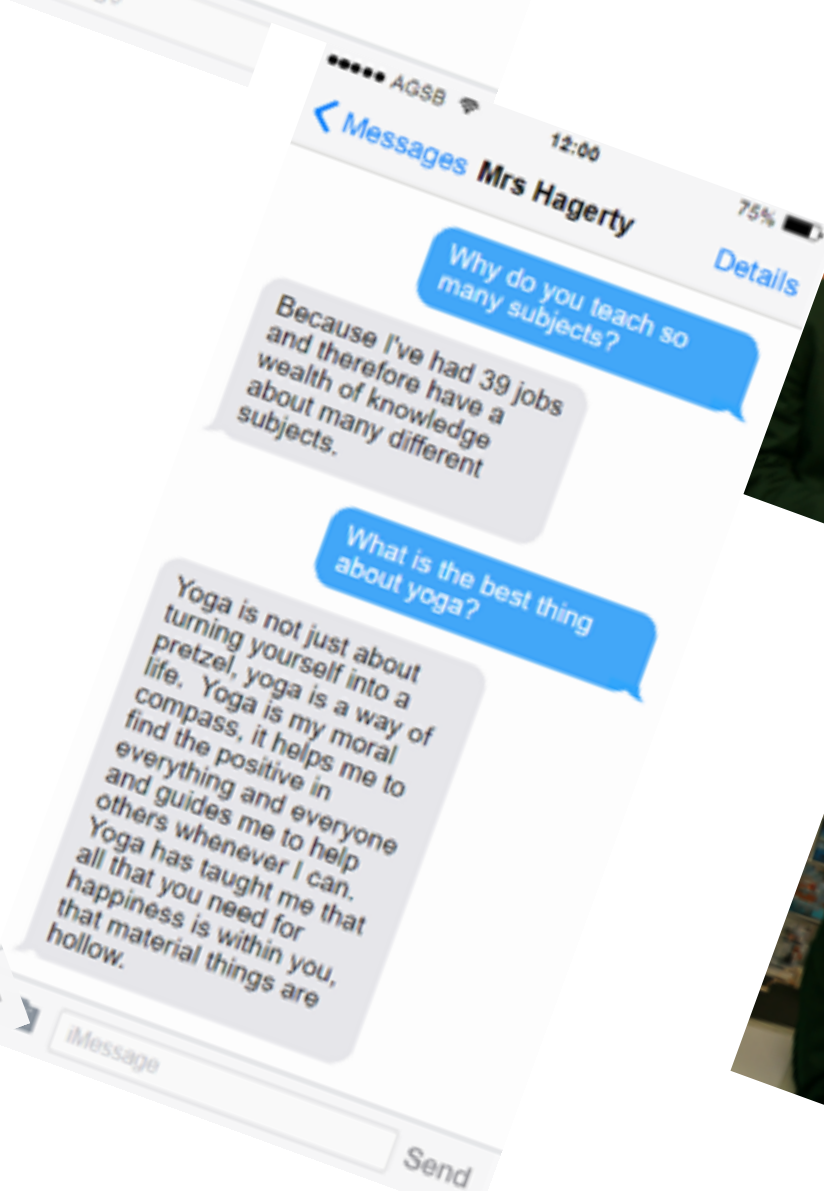
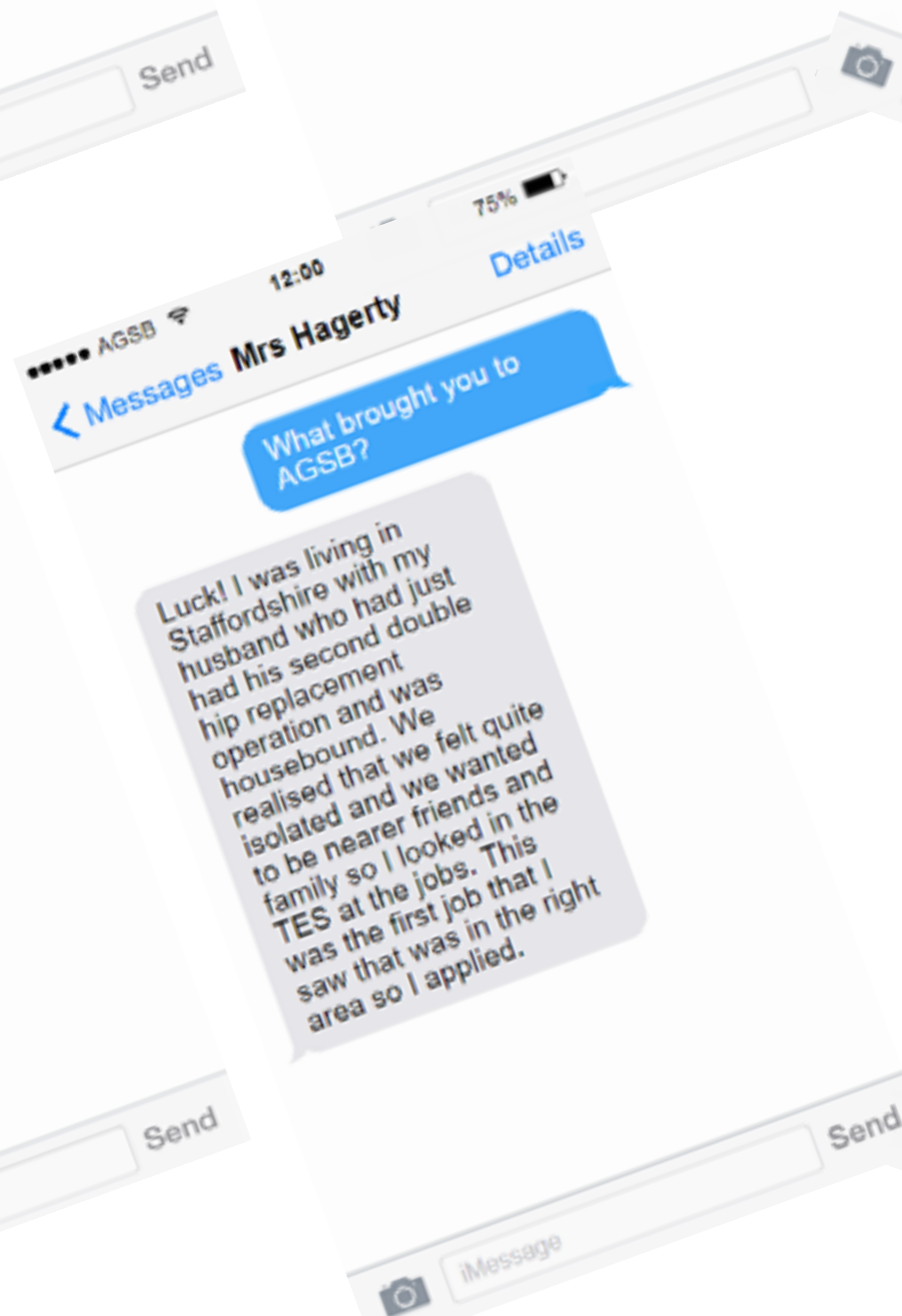
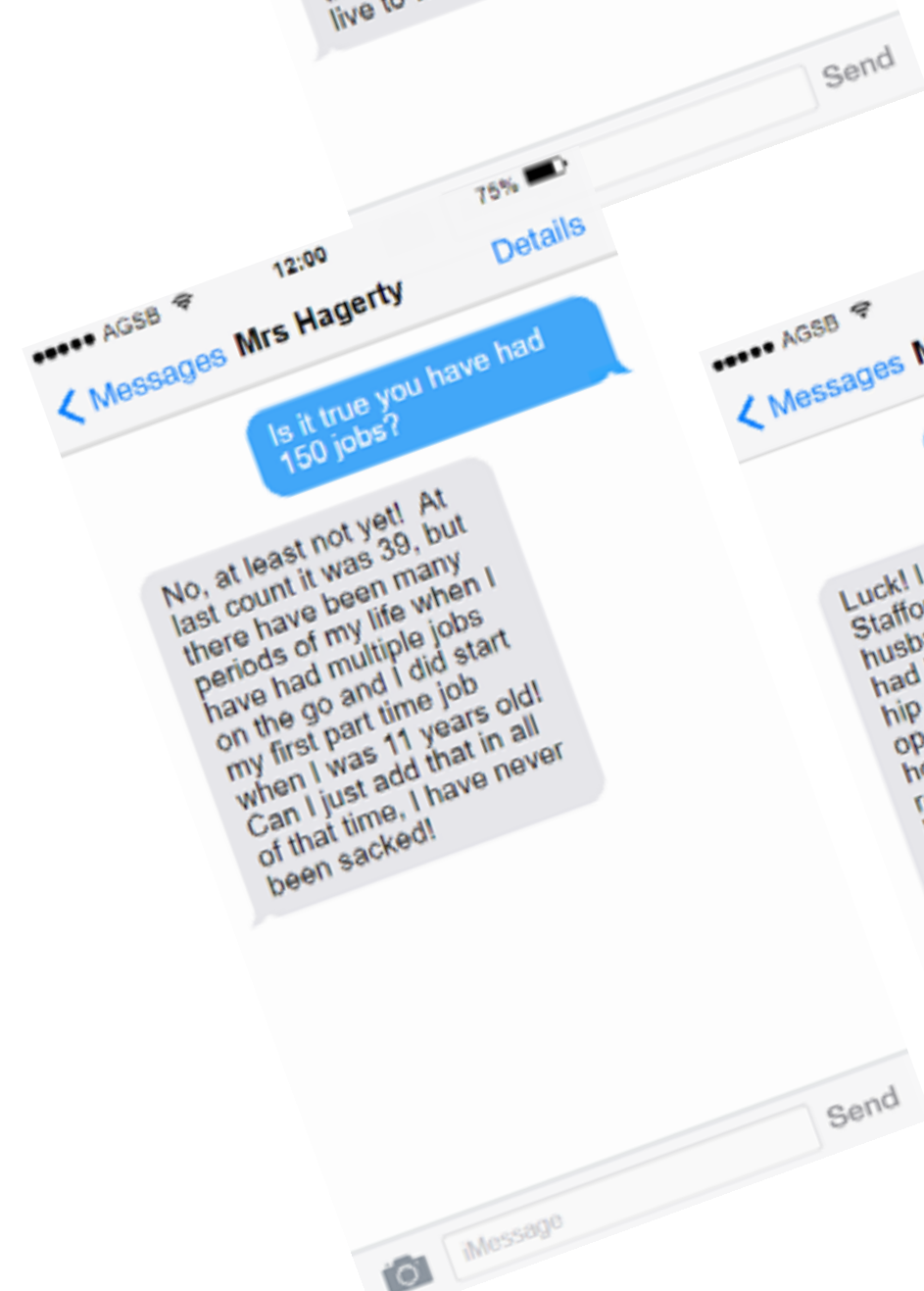
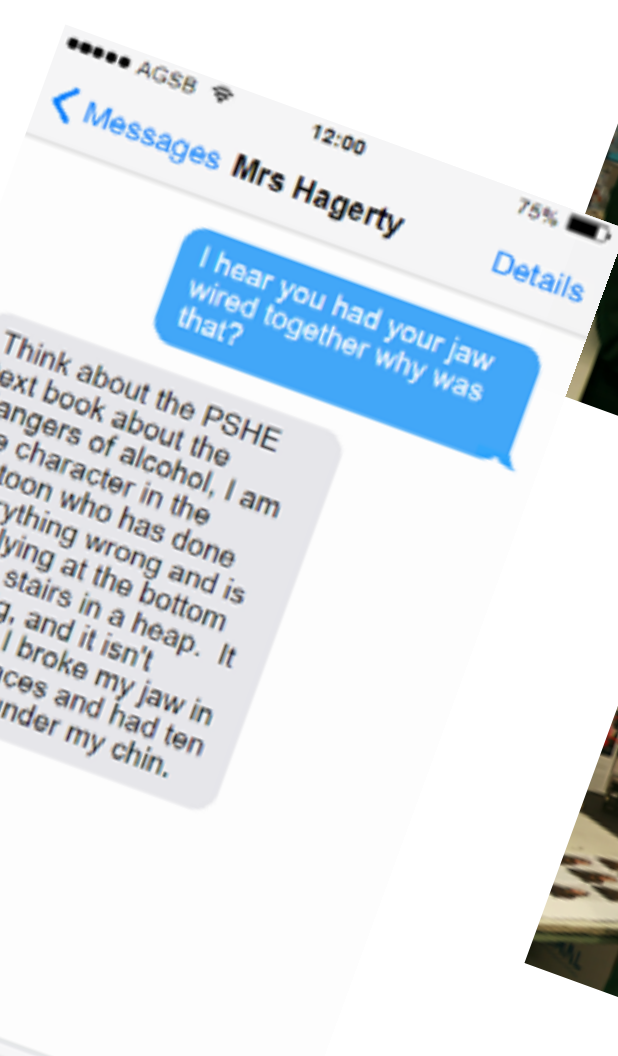




## WhatsApping? Mrs Hagerty











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