





# HEAD TO HEAD



Greetings and a Happy New Year to all readers of The Word! The US baseball player Yogi Berra had something of a way with words - he once said: 'it's like déjà vu all over again'. There is certainly an element of déjà vu as I write: we are again preparing to mass test all pupils for COVID 19 as they arrive at School for the beginning of the Spring term 2022. This morning I received an early morning message sent yesterday from the Department for Education, setting out new measures on face-coverings, with additional procedures concerning ventilation. So, while we are expecting a 'bumpy' start to the new term, I am confident that the resilience, positivity and creativity demonstrated throughout this pandemic by our staff and pupils will result in another successful term at AGSB.

There was much to celebrate during the Autumn term 2021. Whilst 'normality' remains a mirage, the last 4 months have been full of ambition, success and fun. Ambition is obvious everywhere at AGSB. It was obvious last term in a number of areas: In Design and Technology three students received the prestigious Arkwright Engineering Scholarships; both ESU Public Speaking Competition teams made it through the national finals; we continue to be hugely successful in the Maths Olympiad and two of our Year 13 students, won the National Ritangle Maths' competition.

Ambition was equally obvious in the outstanding production of A Little Shop of Horrors, and in music, where both our Big Band and Concert Band have made it through to the NCBF National Finals which take place at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester in April.

It was also wonderful to see the return of our busy sporting programme. Since September, pupils have been involved in 160 fixtures: 56 Rugby, 64 Football, 22 Hockey, 9 Tennis, 4 Table Tennis, 5 Basketball, 2 Cross country and 1 Swimming Gala. As usual, we have enjoyed great success across all sports. I am also pleased to report that our Esports squad continue to be a national force. Furthermore, the House system continues to flourish and last term, pupils had several opportunities to renew House rivalries, be it on the sports field, in debates, or on stage.

There were also some excellent examples of AGSB working together as a community. Highlights include Black History Month, Remembrance, Charitable fundraising and the two Diwali evenings organised by the AGSB Hindu, Sikh and Jain Society.

I trust that you will enjoy reading about another extremely successful term at AGSB in these pages. I wish you a healthy and most enjoyable 2022.

G.A. Wright  
Head Master



Uncertainty dominates much of our thinking as we begin 2022. Uncertainty concerning how the 'Omicron' variant may affect public health over the coming months, uncertainty concerning 2022 assessments, uncertainty concerning the potentiality of another lockdown. With uncertainty around, I'd like to take the opportunity in this head-to-head to focus on an issue that has affected me personally for several years and will possibly be affecting many of us more and more.

Anxiety is a term that gets thrown around a lot to describe a number of feelings that a person may have at some point in their life. According to the NHS website: 'Anxiety is a feeling of unease, such as worry or fear, that can be mild or severe.' Naturally then, many of us may have encountered anxiety in different forms with changing circumstances over the last two years. For some this may be a first, but for others this might just be another repetition in a long chain.

What distinguishes anxiety from being nervous is its persistence. Being nervous is a natural part of life, and we will each have stressors that at times will cause us to be nervous say about a particular event or exam. However, the persistence of anxiety means that it begins to permeate into our day to day lives. That 'feeling of unease' can make once simple tasks into something much more difficult, as your mind is much more preoccupied on something else. Sometimes, it just is 'something else', and finding something to determine as the thing we are anxious about is an impossibility.

The key message I want to communicate is that circumstances are very liable to change rapidly in the current climate, and that can invite these unwelcome feelings. In the first instance, opening up to friends and family about how we're feeling can help to alleviate some of the burden. However, the best way to move toward a sustainable solution is to seek help. Students can either arrange to see the school counsellor by speaking to a trusted member of staff or by emailing [cpickering@agsb.co.uk](mailto:cpickering@agsb.co.uk). Alternatively, students might seek to access support online, through [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk) or [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com) or other trusted sources.

There is no shame in seeking support. If a broken arm was stopping you from living your life, you wouldn't say "it's fine, I just won't lift things". You would go to an A&E. So, if your mental health is stopping you from living your life the way you used to/want to, well then support is always available.

A Saeid  
Head Boy

"I am  
confident that  
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AGSB"

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# GUPTA'S GREETINGS



## STAR OF THE WORD



Hello everyone! Welcome to 2022. Hopefully your Christmas Holiday was relaxing and enjoyable! This is the first edition of "Gupta's Greetings". I'm Aiyush Gupta, an Assistant Editor for the Publications Committee in Year 11. After George continued "Thorni's Thoughts" last edition, I thought it was only right to continue it with my own spin.

This term we welcomed a wide array of eager members to the committee who have brought numerous new skills and have been mentored by our very own veteran members.

Some of the articles this year are fascinating. My personal favourite is the Year 13 Geology Trip which features stunning photography! I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the Word as much as I enjoyed making it.

Aiyush Gupta  
Assistant Editor

My Star of the Word this edition is Tosin! He continually produces high-quality articles and has an incredible eye for detail that has been showcased numerous times throughout the proofreading stages.

Well done Tosin, keep it up!

Finally, thanks to the many members of the committee alongside everyone who contributed to this magazine whose hard work and dedication has led to this collation of our academic & creative achievements.



# NEW LIBRARY

On Wednesday 8th September, I walked up to one of the classrooms in the new block. Just yesterday, Miss Mahony had sent an email calling for all of us book enthusiasts to band together in E2 and become Student Librarians. I, of course, was intrigued by the job and decided to attend the meeting. Apart from being able to help others and sit behind a computer desk, I could get a new, shiny badge!

The meeting was short and sweet. A few other Year 9s had come as well, so at least I had some friends to be with. Miss Mahony and Miss Marson told us all about the job, and we all wrote our names down, so she could contact us. We did not have enough people to have three different Librarians on duty each day, but soon that would not be the case!

The following Tuesday (the day before the library would open), I went in to help organise all the shelves of books for the Senior Fiction section. The library was stunning. With the roof to floor windows, the shelves stuffed to the brim with books that Miss Mahony, Miss Marson and some older Librarians had worked hard to order, and all the space that you could roam through, browsing through books or doing your homework and the airy atmosphere that it had, it was clear that the library would almost always be full. It was an incredible room to behold.

Not to my knowledge, some other Year 9s came in, and saw it as a chance to get a pass so they could come into the library tomorrow. When they realised that they would not get the pass, they instead decided to help us, giving us some new Librarians. A few other Year 9s came in, as well as some Year 8s and a few Year 7s. The rota would definitely be full by now!

On the very day of the opening we put some finishing touches on the library at breaktime. We strung bunting across the windows, stuck balloons onto shelves with a crude mix of blue tack and sticky tape and placed cardboard cut-outs carefully on top of the shelves. There was a mess of papers and cardboard boxes, which would fill hundreds of bins. But luckily, as we couldn't finish binning them at breaktime, Miss Mahony managed to finish the job during third period. The library was ready to be opened!

At lunchtime, I ran to the library, waiting to see it open. I was just in time to see Mr Wright say a short speech and cut the ribbon! All the people who hadn't got a pass at break time were not allowed in, so the library was at its full capacity. We had cupcakes, a raffle that you could enter with your library pass, a skilled student pianist providing background music and, of course, the Student Librarians! For a place that is supposed to be quiet, it was quite noisy and was buzzing with an air of excitement and activity! It was great to see people ranging from Year 7s to Year 13s in the library, all united by a common cause. Reading is a thing that can be enjoyed by all ages!

Since the library opened there have been further developments. We now have a few more librarians, public speaking competitions have taken place and, most important to the library, a few book shelves have been emptied by the avid readers that we have in our school. Reading is a privilege that we must be aware of, and we should make sure that we don't forget it. I cannot help but think as I gaze around these shelves, trying to find the perfect book, or whilst sticking that sheet of paper into my exercise book, that our school is lucky to have a community that cares so much about reading, and two great teachers (and librarians) who have helped all of us out so much: Mrs Mahony and Miss Marson.

E Sajjad and T Ariyo





After a sabbatical in the world of musical theatre, AGSB marked its return to the stage with the classic musical, 'Little Shop of Horrors'. The feat was especially challenging; most years, the society had 6 months to choreograph stage and light a musical. This year, there were only 4. However, when the curtains were drawn back to an audience of young and old in early November, the cast, band and crew were ready.

From auditions in late July, Mrs Jarratt, Miss Clarke and Mr Monument drew their cast members and the sacrifices began. Coming to school during the Summer Holidays was a keen opportunity to bury heads in scripts and learn lines. This all ensured that the return in September would be less stressful. However, the coming weeks leading to the production provided more challenges. Musical Theatre Society had some familiar faces taking lead roles but many new faces in the Ensemble; from old to new, everyone had a part to play.

From heads buried in scripts that did not seem to link and songs and dances yet to be staged, the crew gradually developed their various parts into a basic framework that could be built on over the final weeks. Commitment was a key ingredient in their recipe for success as scenes began to link and the cast grew fonder of the school stage that they would call home away from home for quite a while. The introduction of longer after-school meetings was not a surprise as they all knew that achievement and gain came



## LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS



with a price. To put on a great show, they knew they had to toil tirelessly and keep calm and carry on. During the final two weeks, tweaks and final touches were made and the Coleman Hall seemed to transform into a deadly botanical garden, Audrey II taking centre stage in the newly designed 'Mushnik and Sons' Florist Shop. The Skid Row scene reminded the cast of the monumental task that lay ahead.

Finally, from summer rehearsals to long after-school hours, the cast were ready to act, sing and dance their way through the production and after a well-received Matinee performance on Tuesday 9th November, Wednesday and Friday were bound to be a success.

On the night of Wednesday 10th November, as the lights in the hall dimmed and the opening number began to play, all fear and nerves seemed to disappear as the cast sang, danced and acted their hearts out for a very eager audience. The energy was phenomenal! Songs such as Skid Row, Dentist, The Meek Shall Inherit and Grow for Me filled the hall and a rapturous applause filled the air on the final night as cast, band and crew took their final bows. I guess things weren't so bad after all for those who lived 'Down on Skid Row.'

T Ariyo

From 12th to 14th October, all three GCSE geology groups in Year 11 were presented with the much-expected opportunity for a field trip, putting all the learning over the past year into practical use. On the day of our trip, we assembled at 8:30, promptly herded into the minibuses and driven to the Peak District, near Leek. Although we incurred some difficulties on the journey there – specifically one member of the group struggled to keep an apple down – we finally arrived at our first location: Ecton. Instantly, we were amazed by the size of the beautifully folded antiform that was before our eyes, a geological feature we had only heard about in classes back at school. But we weren't here to stare at it; as soon as we had our hard hats, clipboards, booklets, clinometers and compasses, we were given the task of drawing that giant piece of rock. Then we were told to collate numerous measurements of dip direction of bedding planes on the antiform, so we could process the data back at school. With all the groups finished with this work, we were once again bundled into the minibus and driven to the second location at Park Hall County, as we ate our lunch.

After we had parked up, it was a short hike to the geological feature here, which was Hume Quarry. Once again, we were ordered to draw a section of it and identify the sedimentary

structures present so we could infer the environment of deposition. To help us with this investigation, we were taken a little closer to the cliff face, where we analysed a section of the layered sequence in the rock filled with pebbles and held together by a cement. By analysing the texture of this rock and observing the sedimentary structures, as a group (with slight aid from Doc Rock and Mr Giffen), we deduced the environment of deposition must have been a wadi, formed by a flash flood river.

After this, we were driven back to school – a gruelling one-hour journey after the hard work of the day – arriving on time at 3pm and accompanied with the data that we would use in the following lesson. This would be used to find the direction of compressive stress that formed the antiform in Ecton, using our data first to find the orientation of the axial plane trace.

I'd like to thank Doc Rock and Mr Giffen on behalf of all geology students for organising this great opportunity, and their continued perseverance as they teach us, especially through the pandemic.

I Jamal

## YEAR 11 GEOLOGY FIELD TRIP





# Y13 GEOLOGY TRIP

After the Year 12 geology trip was abandoned, and the infamous Cyprus trip cancelled, the Year 13's were finally given the opportunity to embark on their expedition. They made their way to Kirkby Stephen, a quaint market village that lies at the head of Eden valley. Whilst the location possibly wasn't as exciting as "Europe's Sunniest Island", the geology made up for the lack of heat. We found ourselves trekking all over the North of England to places such as the Lake District, County Durham and even the Yorkshire Dales. We saw many fascinating geological features that included limestone, a rock that formed roughly 420 million years ago when England and Wales were located under a shallow, tropical sea. However, perhaps the best part of the trip was the visit to Shap Pink Quarry, a working quarry that is currently excavating a large granite pluton, a feature that used to be a large body of magma under the ground! We learnt all about how the quarry functions and where the products go, but most importantly it was a nice place to take a memory of the trip back home.

On behalf of the student body, I would like to thank Dr Stephen for organising the trip and Dr Iverson and Mr Giffen for taking us through the geology of the area. And also, Dr Squire and Mr Alsaadi for all the photography and support over the week!

D Turkington





# BUSHCRAFT TRIP

It was that time of the year again when Mrs Short battled against the circumstances to ensure that the Year 7s and Year 8s packed their bags, stepped onto the bus, and embarked on an adventurous journey to Bushcraft.

On the morning of Wednesday 6th October, the Coleman Hall was jam-packed with highly enthusiastic and energetic Year 7s and 8s, who were weighed down by their heavy, gigantic bags. After a highly anticipated wait, the moment arrived, when 400 boys boarded the coaches, ready to be transported to three days of high packed action, adventure, and excitement. The journey itself was memorable, with the bus traversing through the curvaceous roads adorned with luscious green foliage and evergreen crop fields full of harvest for the winter.

On arrival, everyone was greeted by warm and cheerful Bushcraft staff who divided the boys into tribes and showed them around the campsite. This was followed by a fire-lighting workshop demonstrating how to light and manage a fire for warmth and food, which is an absolute essential for survival in the wilderness. The knowledge was successfully put to practice as every group was in proud possession of a roaring campfire that made mealtimes cosier. Next in line was the building of independent shelters by every group, using complex knots and pegs, all of which could be created with natural resources from the woods. These shelters, demanding high craftsmanship, would become the nightly abode for the boys for next two nights. The highly laborious construction and resource gathering activity made everyone ravenous. So, after filling their stomachs with some delicious spaghetti bolognese, the students then ventured into the dark woods where it was pitch black and dared to play games such as 'Capture the lamp' and 'Manhunt'. It was a blast (other than the odd person tripping over)! When it was time for bed, the students could choose to sleep either in the tents or the 'Shelters' that they had made earlier. A few brave hearts chose the shelters, while the majority went with the comforts of the pre-made tents.

The next day was lined up with many interesting activities such as wood carving, camping games, foraging and woodland walks exploring the local flora and fauna. The day also included a First Aid training session which armoured the boys with life-saving skills of treating an injured person and using the DRABS response to diagnose the injury. Away from their mobile screens and technology, these activities encouraged the students to learn new skills while interacting with their peers in a fun, creative environment; proving that one can still have fun without the dependency on modern digital devices. All this was backed up with a scrumptious breakfast, lunch, and dinner, which was relished by both the children and the teachers.

The final day was the most exciting one by far. Using all that they had learnt over the last two days, the students had to complete the 'Bushcraft Challenge'! A complicated challenge, which would require the use of their wits, survival instincts and teamwork to prove their worth. Students, in teams of around twelve, had to gather resources from the woods to create a shelter, scavenge edible food, gather water, and create a campfire. Although competitive, all the groups enjoyed the challenge whilst applauding achievements, encouraging friendships and celebrating team building. The team which won, not only received a large goody bag filled to the brim with cookies, digestives, jaffa cakes and many more treats, but also got to tuck into some burgers first. There couldn't have been a better conclusion to an exhilarating and adventuresome trip!

The students thanked the Bushcraft staff (no tears luckily) and were ready to embark on the journey back to school, happily reminiscing over the many fun memories they had made which will definitely be cherished for a long time.

V Saini





### GUIDE TO NEW FACILITIES

- Artificial Grass Pitch for football and rugby
- Two cricket pitches with three new wickets
- Six new cricket nets
- Tennis courts bubble



In the last week of a hectic half term for the house system, the final competition of the six weeks took place at the beginning the 18th of October. The House Winter Sports festival has become something of a tradition at AGSB; running for 3 years in a row, boys from each house organise themselves into teams, competing against each other in various sports. From Hockey to rugby, Cross-Country to Table Tennis, there was something for everyone.

House Sports at AGSB has taken on a new identity over the past 3 years, with the competitions developing from Sports Day in July 2019 to Tug O' War, Summer Sports and other smaller house events throughout the year. The Winter Sports festival is held at the very beginning of the year and allows each house the opportunity to leave their mark on the standings for the Saville Laver Cup.

The week began with Year 7 on Monday, bringing their first taste of the sense of community and teamwork. This invaluable skill will be developed as they continue to compete with their peers and establish friendships and links that will last lifetime. For Year 8 onwards, it was much of the same, gathering the same team from last year (or even stronger ones) looking to retain victory or steal the title from last year's victors. Each year group went one after the other on each day, competing in Rugby, Hockey, Table Tennis and Badminton, with Football and Cross-Country to be separate events.



## SPORT FOR ALL

AGSB is an amazing school that is enriched by its diverse and ambitious community and where all students' talents are celebrated and recognised.

We embrace education in its broadest sense, encouraging excellence in sport, the creative arts, music, engineering, scientific innovation and debating. By offering a wide range of opportunities to all students, the school is preparing us to be self-confident team players who are well prepared for life beyond AGSB.

The leaders of the school have developed a long-term phased Development Masterplan that will see our campus transform, giving us the facilities and space to enhance our opportunities. We are now at the start of Phase 1 that will give us much needed outdoor sports that we can use all year round and be available to all students regardless of their sporting talents and prowess. This could be the last year that we face water-logged pitches and unplayable surfaces!

We now need to raise £1 million and the school has embarked upon an ambitious campaign, 'Making a Difference – Sport for All', that will see us create a new artificial grass pitch followed by a Tennis Bubble and significantly improved cricket provision.

We are now at the start of a capital campaign, that runs for the entire academic year 2021/2022. A volunteer Campaign

Board, made up of parents and staff, are already working hard organising campaign receptions where groups of parents are invited to hear the fundraising story and ask questions about the campaign.

As the Campaign Chair, Tim Heatley (year 7 parent), says, "I believe that providing our sons with all-year round facilities that cater for a wide variety of sports is essential for both their physical and mental well-being and will make a massive difference to their AGSB experience". Over the coming months we will also be inviting former students to hear our fundraising story and get involved.

Ultimately, the success of our campaign lies with those who have a vested interest in our school's future, so we urge everyone to accept our invitation to come to a reception and to hear all about our exciting plans.

"Given the immense impact our sporting facilities have on both the mental and physical well-being of our students, as well as providing students with opportunities to grow and better themselves, I truly hope you will support this campaign". – A Saeid, Head Prefect

C Hutt

## WINTER SPORTS FESTIVAL 2021



The House Winter Sports festival was not only for the able sportsmen. The dangers and disruption of the pandemic meant that many teams were without their top performers, encouraging the most unlikely of members to take part in a sport. This sense of responsibility and willingness to support one's house is encouraged through participation in sport.

So, after a week of gruelling physical activity and intense rivalry, the results were in:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
1st: Tatton	1st: Massey	1st: Tatton
2nd: Stamford	2nd: Bradbury	2nd: Massey
3rd: Massey	3rd: Stamford	3rd: Stamford
4th: Bradbury	4th: Tatton	4th: Bradbury

Congratulations to all those who took part and won in the competitions. Hopefully, standards as high as these will continue to be sustained for years to come. I am sure that we are looking forwards for the winter sports festival again next year!

T Ariyo





## SIXTH FORM PUBLIC SPEAKING

In the first couple of weeks of this year, the Sixth Form took part in the annual Public Speaking Competition.

For the Year 13 Public Speaking Competition, the motion was 'Every positive value has its price in negative terms ...the genius of Einstein leads to Hiroshima'.

It was an excellent first competition hosted in the New Library and there was a fantastic turnout from students across the school. A rigorous contest was ultimately won by the opposition, consisting of Ben F and Wurdaan K, from Stamford, and James L and Tom S, from Bradbury.

Stamford was awarded first place by virtue of Wurdaan's incisive and wide-ranging answers as Responder. The defeated proposition team consisted of Bilal M & Luka H, from Massey, as well as Kiran D who kindly stepped in as a late replacement for Tatton. The judges felt Luka was particularly determined in the presentation of his arguments so Massey gained third place.

For the Year 12 Public Speaking Competition, the motion was 'Brexit poses more opportunities than threats to businesses in the UK'.

The participants produced an excellent debate and turnout from students across the school in the New Library was again superb. The high-standard competition was won by the proposition, consisting of Tom C and Shrevas A, from Massey, and Sammy B and Gaurav B, from Tatton.

Tatton was awarded first place by virtue of Gaurav's well-informed and confidently delivered answers as Responder. The defeated opposition team consisted of Rameez P and Faaris H, from Stamford, and Adhav C and Taimr A, from Bradbury. The judges felt Taimr was particularly impressive in his questioning so Bradbury gained third place.

Many thanks to Ms Chapman, Mr Davies, Ms Clark, Adham S and Kiran D for judging the competition as well as Ms Marson, who hosted the event. Thank you to all the students who also came along to support their friends and their different houses.

N Croxton

On Monday 8th and Tuesday 9th November, six Year 9 forms spent a full day at Salford Quays. Everyone was eager to get to school, ready to go to the Salford Quays. By nine o'clock we were in the Coleman Hall waiting for Mr Williams to begin his short presentation on 'cotton to culture' which was the current geography topic that Year 9 students were studying. By 9:30 we were all split into our groups and taken outside to begin our first activity. Each student was then given a card corresponding to a specific time of the growth and regeneration of Salford Quays. This was by far the hardest task as all the students could not wait to get there, forgetting their actual task! Although everyone was focused on getting to Salford, we managed to complete the enormous timeline.

By the time our coaches arrived, we were split into groups again. Within minutes of being on the bus everyone was on their phones but at least it was not chaotic. After a further twenty minutes of waiting, we had arrived at the Quays and immediately immersed into our surroundings; which, for some of us, was disrupted by work booklets given to write information. However, it was now time for us to investigate how successful the regeneration of Salford Quays has been.

So, from around 10:45 we walked across the Quays and explored developed areas such as the Lowry, the Millennium Footbridge, The Imperial War Museum, Media City Footbridge, Media City, Detroit Bridge and Docks, the NV buildings, the Quays Watersports Centre, and the Outlet Mall.



## SALFORD QUAYS TRIP



We were then gifted a short lunch break in the lowry outlet mall after two hours of walking. With us being full of energy and ready to continue our journey, we were given questions to find answers by using our observation skills and previous knowledge from Year 7 and 8. As the trip came to an end, we collected all the information on the sites and surrounding to take back to school for further research and to use in our assessment.

O Baig





Lunchtimes used to be a bunch of 12 year olds huddled in the school car-park trying to play cricket while there is a football game going on at the same place at the same time. The relaunch of lunchtime activities has rejuvenated lunchtimes, transforming them from 40 minutes of dullness into 60 minutes of adventure, drama, and enlightenment. There are now a wide variety of lunchtime activities running at lunch with new ones being started every week!

The newly built Library in T3 is now open before school, during break time and at lunch. To use a table, you would need a Library Pass which you can obtain by simply visiting the library in the morning or during break and asking one of the very helpful library staff for a Library Pass. But you can always just pop in and have a browse at some of the amazing books. The library is a great place for either revising for a test, catching up on some homework or just relaxing and reading a good book.

Program your Mondays and decode your Fridays with creative coding club in S10 at lunchtime! First come, first serve is the motto on which it runs, so make sure you get there on time. Creative Coding Club gives you a chance to use the computers for either: Game Development, Animation, Digital Art, and other creative activities! You can work independently or collaborate with your friends, get some help from some of the older students or get involved in some of the competitions which shall be running throughout the year!



# LUNCHTIME CLUBS



For those who want to exercise their grey cells, the chess club in N8 is a wonderful opportunity to either practise your chess or just have some fun with a friend. Every Tuesday (Year 7s Only), Wednesday, Thursday the chess club is an extremely popular club where you can battle against your friends (or foes) in a test of wit, bravery, and logic. Not only are there chess activities at lunch but there are also many chess tournaments after school which you can get involved in.

Engage your inner scientist and come along to the Physics Concept Society in PC5 (12:30 – 13:10) every Wednesday. The Physics Concept Society is an opportunity for students to discuss things they find interesting from physics. Every week, one of the Physics Prefects will present a different concept for everybody to learn about and discuss.

It's never too late to activate your artistic trait. Come along to Art Club in A2 on Thursday lunch and create some illustrations for the AGSB Student Cookbook. It is an amazing opportunity to just relax and create some stunning works of art!

With so much on your plate, you can't complain. So make hay while the sun shines and enjoy the lunchtime buzz!

V Saini

Sir David Amess' story devastated the nation on the 15th October 2021. An MP murdered but sadly not the first to be killed whilst serving his country, but the first MP to be killed in 5 years. Sir David passed away after being stabbed multiple times at his constituency surgery in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. He was pronounced dead at the scene at 1:13pm. A 25-year-old man, Ali Harbi Ali, was arrested at the scene and later charged with murder and the preparation of terrorist acts. Who was Sir David Amess and what did he achieve?

Sir David Amess was a long-serving politician who first entered Parliament as a Member of Parliament for Basildon. He was a member of the Conservative party however he didn't hold any senior positions in the party. He supported animal welfare, he was a practising Catholic and he supported the EU referendum. David Amess became Sir David Amess as he was knighted by the Queen in 2015 for his political and public service. He studied at Bournemouth University and at the time of his death, Sir David was an MP for Southend West. He left behind his wife, Julie Arnold and 3 children.

A Sadiq



# SIR DAVID AMESS





We had the privilege to welcome ex-pupil of AGSB, Shafae Ali, for his talk on Design and Technology. It was an invaluable experience to talk to the Year 10s and Year 11s on his journey through AGSB and beyond.

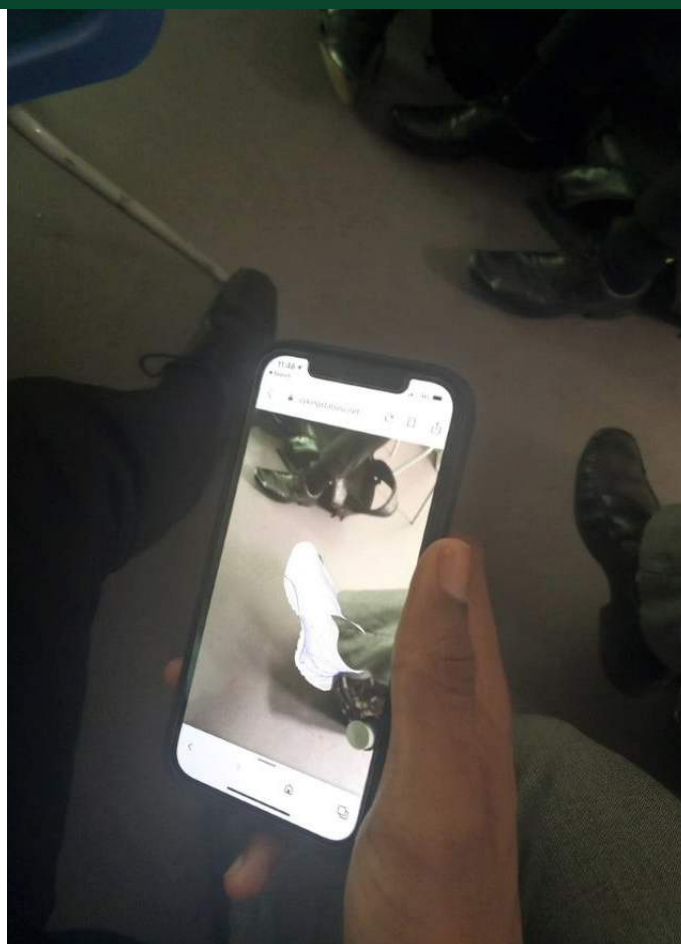
The talk began with a quick introduction from Shafae himself while being accompanied by Mr. Williams reminiscing about his old time at the school. We were introduced to the many projects and products that he had been working on including experience at top design companies such as Dyson and Rheon. We were able to see augmented reality footwear and maximum safety face masks. We learned the meaning of "fit for purpose" in the real world with real use cases.

Shafae's talk inspired us to think creatively in several ways, the first of which is engaging with people to gauge design problems. It is fair to say that Product Design is an important part of everyone's lives and without it the world wouldn't be what it is today. Shafae opened our eyes to a multitude of opportunities that are to come our way and how to truly take advantage of them.

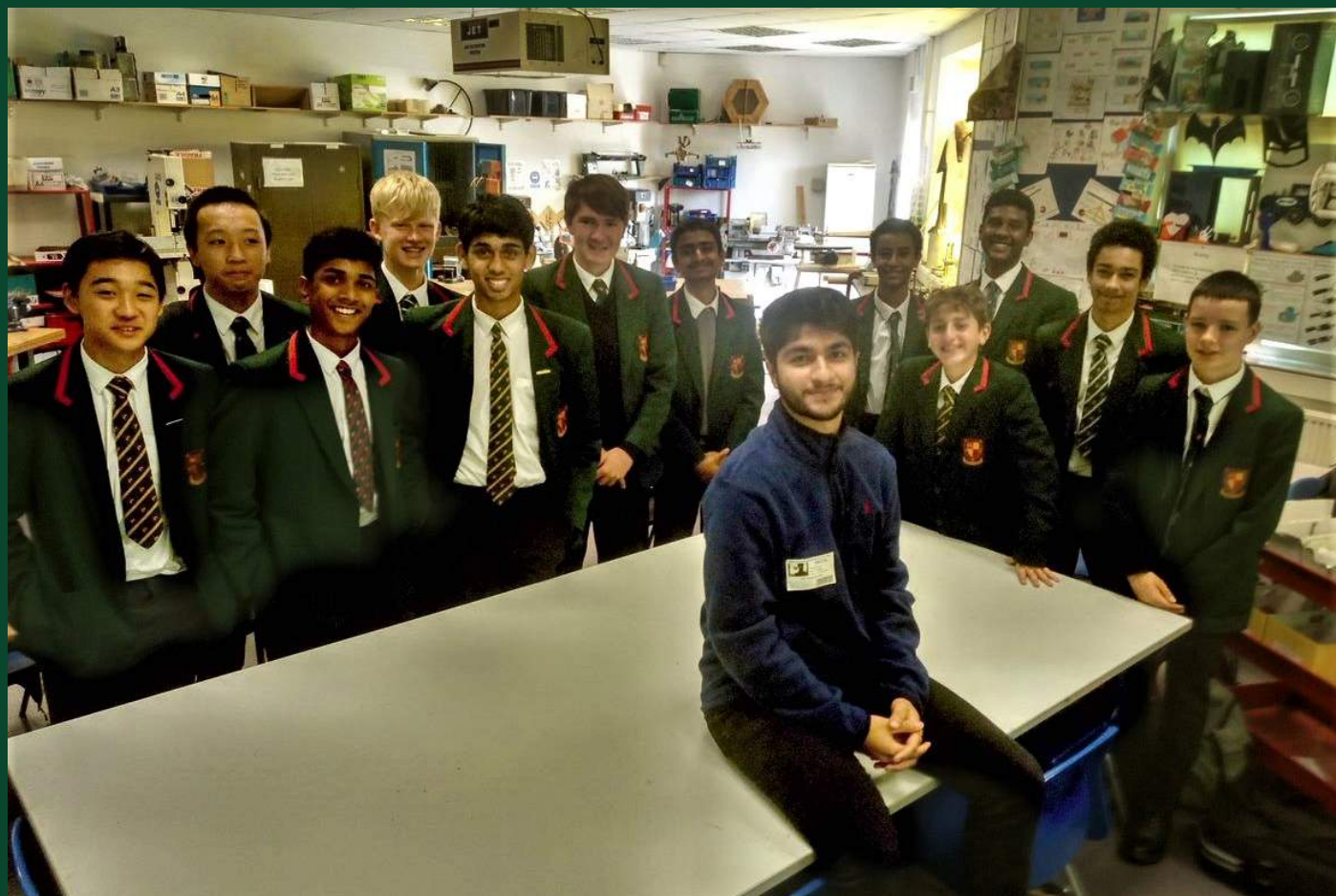
A link to his projects are below.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_58fmm\\_3fgtLBsKGQuBwEA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_58fmm_3fgtLBsKGQuBwEA)

M Dave



## SHAFAE ALI TECH TALK



Our Model United Nations team recently went to the Model United Nations Cheadle Hulme (MUNCH) conference which is one of the largest conferences in the North West. We went with the delegation of Australia and we had a representative in the following committees: Human Rights Council, Human Rights Committee, Health and Social, DISEC (Disarmament), Special Committee on the Environment, Political, Historical Council and Youth.

All our delegates had an absolutely wonderful time in their committees. Throughout the weekend in the preparation writing of clauses and resolutions we had to think quickly and argue on the spot. We also had to come up with a variety of 'Joke Amendments'. In three separate committees, our delegates managed to secure extra funding for glue to stick down Australian infrastructure (as it is at the bottom of the earth), which is just one example of the more fun side of MUN.

We achieved an amazing level of success in the conference. Our delegates secured four outstanding awards (Haidar J, Adam S, Wurdaan K and Abdulla A), two highly commended awards (A Saeid, G Bhalla) and one commended award (T Coates). Winning these along with one in school assembly, it contributed to our overall delegation award. We won the highest number of awards at the conference of Outstanding Delegation for the first time since 2013. As a student led group, this was immensely encouraging for the school. We would like to thank Mr Soulsby our advisor, Ms Cathcart, and Mr Wright who helped supervise over the weekend.

A Saeid



MODEL UNITED NATIONS



## MUN WINNER





# UTSAV 2021

About two months ago, Soham Bhansali, Harish Chandra Nair and Aahi Shah (students of AGSB and AGGS) sat down and decided they need to do something, something festive, something entertaining, something to get everyone back on their feet following a year and a half in lockdown. That something was Utsav 2021.

Utsav 2021 – a multicultural performance night, Altrincham's first ever! Two nights, 15 performances, 87 performers and 39 volunteers; in under two months of preparations, Utsav 2021 was set to go.

On Wednesday 17th and Thursday 18th November, students from AGSB's Hindu Sikh and Jain society (HSJS) joined forces with AGGS' Hindu Society. Together, they took on the task of entertaining 350 attendees, which included students, parents, and staff, at this much anticipated event.

The Hindu, Sikh and Jain Society had two clear goals; spread the awareness of the cultural diversity within the two schools through fifteen energetic performances and raise as much money as possible for the chosen charity – Veerayatan, a UK registered charity.

The first half of the night consisted of a wide variety of multicultural performances including dancing, drama, singing and more! The performances ranged from jazz bands to traditional Gujarati dance to the re-enactment of the Ramayana. Every performer was a volunteer and had a chance to express their creativity in different forms. Moreover, the audience were taken aback by three mesmerising performances by AGSB's very own 'Big Band', 'Concert Band' and 'Rock Band'.

Understanding the value of good education, Veerayatan stood out as being the perfect charity. Their fundamental aim of providing education by building schools for underprivileged children in rural India aligned strongly with our core values. Veerayatan is a charity that strives to uplift and empower humanity through the three jewels of humanitarianism (Sewa), education (Sadhana) and inner development (Shiksha).

Altrincham's first ever multicultural performance night turned out to be a tremendous success, surpassing any expectations we had by raising an incredible £2800. This huge figure was only possible through the generous support we received from all the attendees and sponsors.

Every single penny raised will go to building a new library in Tirthankar Mahavir Vidhya Mandir school in Palitana, India. A big thank you to all those who attended and helped at the event!

This event allowed many AGSB and AGGS students to gain invaluable experiences. The chance to be on stage in front of many familiar and unfamiliar faces improved the confidence of the performers. In addition, the HSJS volunteers were able to develop as leaders through managing the various aspects of the event, decorations, food and drinks, tickets, and performances.

I also asked our very own Head Prefect and Deputy Headmaster to give their testament on the event

## A Saeid (Head Prefect)

"Attending Utsav 2021 is really an experience I'm glad I got to have before I left this school.

It was an absolutely extraordinary night, during which the Coleman Hall was almost unrecognisable, not that anyone took their eyes off the performers all night.

It is truly a testament to the power of diversity and student leadership at AGSB, that such an amazing event could be arranged by the HSJS almost entirely independently and I couldn't be more proud of what they've achieved. Fantastic work."

## Mr Hall (Deputy Head)

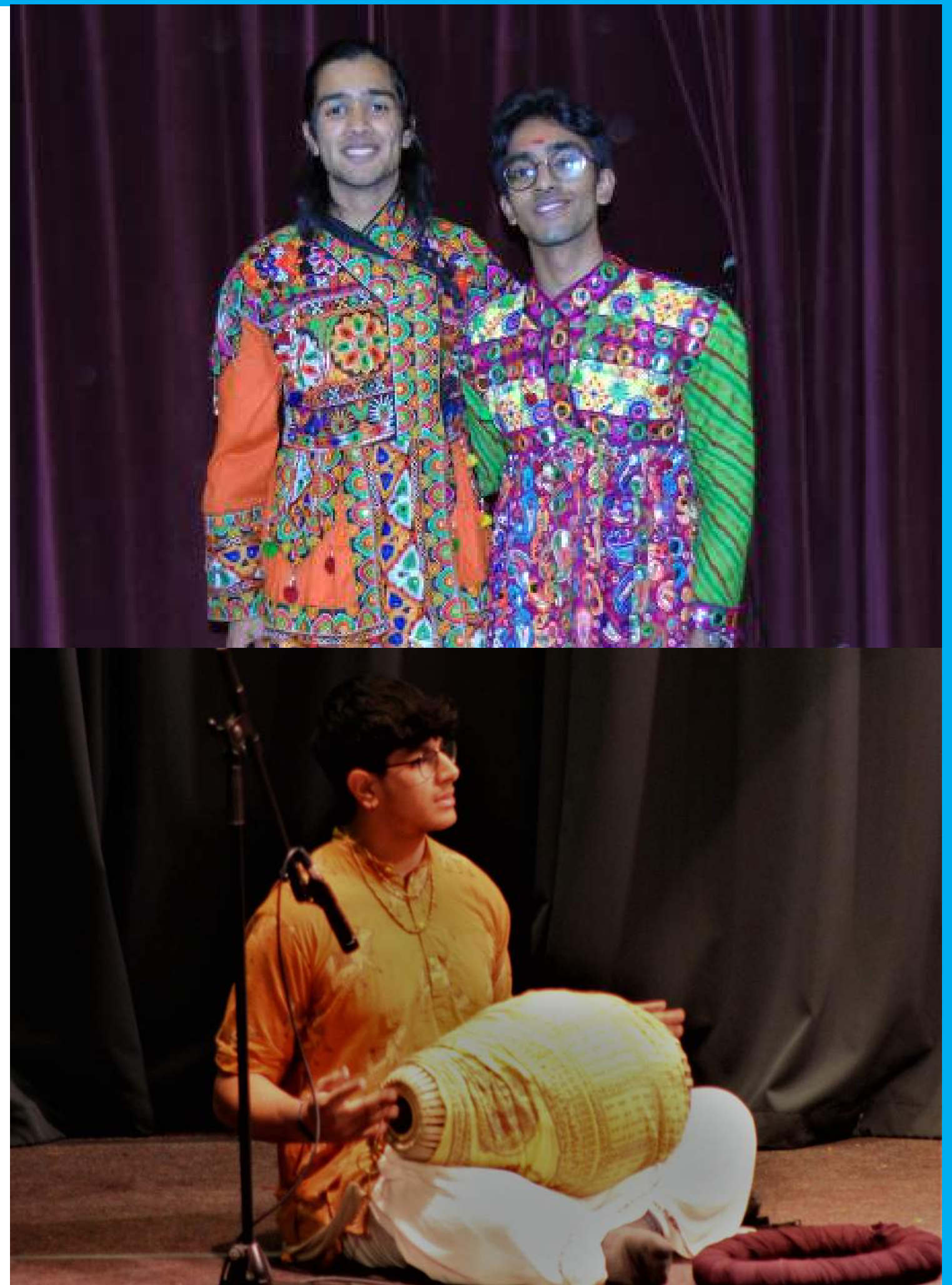
"The event overall was successful and it is a major undertaking to arrange the Coleman Hall, organise costumes, liaise with outside people, sort catering etc. This is very impressive - as were the assemblies you all put on.

I loved the dance bits personally. I really appreciated the artistry and the dedication to perfect the art shown by those performing them. The enthusiasm was also wonderful to see and how you all came together as one on the night."

Overall, Utsav 2021 was a great two nights, with all performers, attendees and volunteers enjoying it thoroughly. We hope to see you again next year! Thank you again to all that attended the event and helped us raise as much as we did!

To find out more about the event, be sure to check out our Instagram page [@aggsb.hsjs](https://www.instagram.com/aggsb.hsjs)! There's tons of pictures, videos and other information about our society that you can scroll through.

S Bhansali









Every year the Art Department runs the ARTiculation competition. It is the Roche Court Educational Trust's national and international public speaking initiative, championing the appreciation and discussion of art. It enables a wide range of students aged between fourteen and 23 to develop their confidence and ability to express their opinions, thoughts and reactions to the visual world.

The three finalists were Charlie L, Rameez P and Lewis McCulloch. Lewis will be representing the school in the Regional round in January with his presentation.

A Gupta

Source: articulation.org



## ARTICULATE



At the end of September, the Art students in Year 12 and 13, travelled to Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester for a full day of workshops with the other Art students from Loreto college. In preparation for a national competition, we spent a day analysing some of the work being shown at the gallery. After spending the morning of team building and collaborative exercises, we were divided into teams and were allocated a piece of art to present our thoughts to the other groups.

What surprised me the most, was the work being displayed with the wide use of media. We were given a textile-based piece to analyse, while the other two groups worked with a more classical painting. Another group were given a documentary film being screened in the gallery. This diversity meant no group's work was the same and allowed us to have more ambitious and open-minded discussions.

The trip really let the students embrace their creativity, being given a piece and having to come up with meaning that isn't already available to you. It also helped massively in honing our analytical minds and thinking more outside the box. However, something I wasn't prepared for was how much it forced us to work on our presentation and communication skills. It's good being able to have interesting and thought-provoking ideas, but having the confidence and eloquence to convey them to both your groups and presenting is just as important.



## WHITWORTH ART MUSEUM TRIP



This course was a great way to help us improve our public presentation skills. I'd like to thank both Miss Lee and Miss Cooke for looking after and putting up with two years worth of art students for a full day; the gallery for their hospitality and our team leaders for being especially helpful and enthusiastic throughout. In future, this is a must do trip for anyone interested in thinking critically and creatively and working well in a team environment.

F Squire





# SHINE AWARDS 2021

On Monday 27th September, Mr Williams, Mr Binns, Hasanat A and I travelled down to London for the annual Shine School Media Awards. The Shine Awards is a prestigious national competition, where schools from all across the UK enter their magazines and compete for a diverse selection of prizes, ranging from 'Best Marketing Strategy' to 'Best Cartoon'. Despite serious competition from some of the best secondary schools around, we were, yet again, invited down to attend the celebratory lunch. This year, the award was changed slightly, with the event being held in the impressive Guildhall.

During the event, we listened to speakers talking about their experiences competing within the event as well as how this had helped them going forward. We were then treated to a wonderful lunch of chicken and mushrooms, served with some potatoes. Following this, the award ceremony began. This year, our magazine was 'highly commended' in the 'Best Overall Content' category. This was a great success for the committee and really epitomised the hard work that went on within the committee during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The following day, we relaxed and went sightseeing - with a little twist. Despite the weather being unsettled, we embarked on a three hour bike tour around the city of London with Ola, an amazing tour guide from 'Notting Hill Bike Tours'. Ola explained the history of some of the great London architecture as well as including fun trivia about the great Swedish bands who played in the Royal Albert Hall. We had some tea and biscuits in the lashing London rain and got to experience London from a completely different perspective.

Finally, it was time to return home. The two days had flown by, from having a formal lunch in one of the grandest halls in London to cycling through mud the following day. Overall, it was a great experience and was a little reward for the hard work everyone put in. I would like to thank Mr Williams and Mr Binns for making this trip possible, as well as Hasanat for coming along and organising the second day, despite the lack of concern for the changing weather!

I Cooper





# YEAR 7 OUTDOOR MUSIC CONCERT

Music at AGSB is up and running! The AGSB music department was delighted to welcome parents to its first music concert of 2021/2022 on Thursday 23rd September. The evening was made even better by the lovely weather and the background of the new build, as plenty of proud mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters looked on.

Usually, the Outdoor Autumn Concert runs annually as it is a chance for the Year 7 students to learn about music at AGSB and be inspired by the bands, however due to COVID, it hasn't gone ahead for 2 years- since I was in Year 7.

It was a great way for the Year 7 students to kickstart their AGSB musical career, with the evening featuring captivating singing performances from them, as well as a few great pieces from the Big Band such as 'The Jazz Police' and 'Sir Duke' and also some favourites from the Concert Band like 'Birdland' and 'The Avengers'.

It was refreshing to see a full house after such a long time without being able to do larger scale events like this one.

We in the Concert Band and Big Band are hugely grateful to Mr. Monument for dedicating his time into the bands and selecting a programme full of great pieces – it really paid off. Thanks also too Mrs. Jarratt, Mr. Smith and the whole Music Department for preparing the Year 7 pupils.

Hopefully, all future music concerts and events are as exciting and successful as this one.

M Inegbu



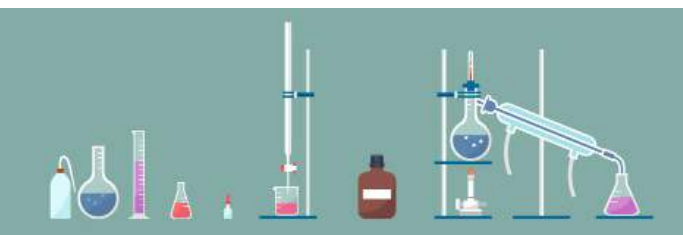


In Mahjong Club you play a tile-based Chinese game usually played with 4 people. It trains your memory, observational skills and adaptive strategic thinking. This game will allow you to immerse yourself in the Chinese culture and even learn some Chinese words while having fun with your friends.

**Place:** C18  
**Time:** 12:30 - 13:15  
**Days:** Wednesday

Chemistry Club offers students the opportunity to take part in a wide range of different experiments that often stretch far outside of the GCSE and even A-level courses including methane rockets, flame tests and elephant's toothpaste, sparklers, glue from milk, chemical luminescence and much more. Chemistry club will be open to years 9, 10 & 11.

**Place:** N10  
**Time:** 12:20 - 12:50  
**Days:** Wednesday



## CLUBS IN SCHOOL

Playing a social game has many benefits. Whether you're a master or a beginner, Chess Club allows you to meet people, make new friends and relate with people who have the same passion as you. Some of the most rewarding moments as a part of a chess club comes from listening to experienced players. As a newer player, you can learn so much by hearing others talk about their games. It's an amazing skill to be able to take analysis from another game and apply it to your own, in and out of chess.

**Place:** N8  
**Time:** 12.30 - 13.00  
**Days:** Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

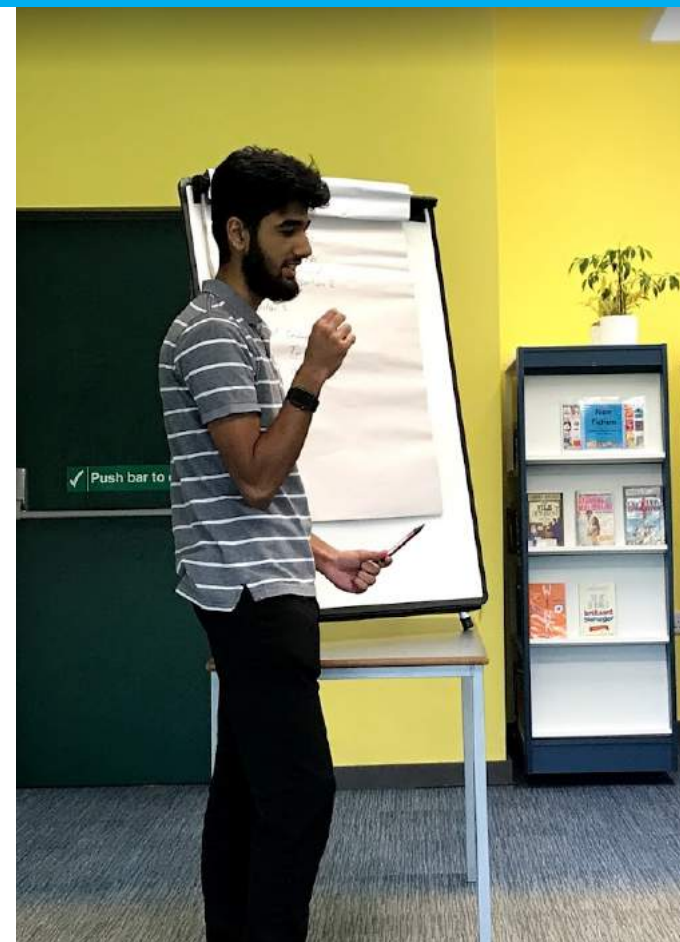
A Ko



At the beginning of the academic year, AGSB's Official Medicine and Dentistry society was launched. I have had the privilege of being the president of this society alongside H. Jafar and Y. Ahmad. The society aims to provide aspiring doctors, dentists and medical professionals with an insight into the career they want. While in year 12, we currently focus on aptitude tests, personal statements and general insights into the career, in year 13 we progress onto mock interviews and examinations. With the help of Dr Thomas and other teachers, we have managed to form a well-respected society with regular attendees and multiple guest speakers.

The first talk was from former AGSB student, Adam Riaz. Adam now studies medicine at the University of Cambridge. Having succeeded in a difficult pathway to medicine, Adam revealed tips and secrets as to how he succeeded on his BMAT and UCAT, wrote an impressive personal statement as well as revealing how he balanced all this alongside extra-curricular activities and outstanding grades. The session was extremely beneficial with Adam spending all of lunchtime in AGSB's new library as well as answering many questions towards the end. The library was completely full as many arrived to listen to the talk.

The second guest speaker brought in by AGSB's Official Medicine and Dentistry Society was Dr Mike Thurm – An A&E hospital doctor. Dr Thurm gave a detailed insight into the true realities of a doctor, the positives and negatives.



## MEDICINE AND DENTISTRY SOCIETY



Dr Thurm was also the author of a book, alongside other AGSB alumni, called 'The What, why and how of getting into Medical School'. His knowledge around this stemmed from his personal experiences, as well as having been a professor at UCLan Medical School where he was also a key member of the interview panel. This allowed Dr Thurm to reveal key tips and attributes associated with successful interviewees. The book will be available for free to all members of the Medicine and Dentistry Society.

We plan to have many more guest speakers arriving soon: from insights into specialities of medicine to more experienced figures such as consultants.

T Arshad





The years 412-323 BC were the years in which the great Cynic Diogenes roamed the streets and lecture theatres of Athens and Corinth, discussing ethics, metaphysics and epistemology with all who would engage with him. In Diogenes, we see an example of a man, so profoundly motivated by his search for the truth and willing to argue his case so passionately that he left behind the prosperous world of his upbringing for a life as an aesthete. He lived in a barrel in the market place, spoke with dogs and rejected the trappings of 'sophisticated' Hellenistic culture - wandered bearing a lamp in the daylight, claiming to be looking for 'an honest man' and even spoke back sarcastically to the great Emperor Alexander, such was his commitment to his values and to the release of a greater human existence. So, it is in the model of Diogenes, a truth seeker and enthusiast, that Philosophy Society was formed, albeit with slightly less of the barrel-living and public indecency!

Philosophy Society is a group that meets once a week on Wednesday during lunch times in S4 (Mr Perkins' room) to discuss a wide variety of philosophical topics that interest and asks students to engage their cerebral facilities towards questions we might not consider day-to-day. On questions of reality, knowledge and ethics, the Society is like the nagging child asking 'why'-, why eat animals? why think of time the way we do? why accept that we can know things simply by looking around with our senses? Our aim? To take a look around the world, unpick our assumptions and see what



## PHILOSOPHY SOCIETY



we can know about the deep questions. The Society is co-ordinated by the dedicated Mr Sampson, who returned the organisation to its feet after a COVID-y absence but most sessions are not run by staff members but by students from a variety of years who research and read about the enquiry question of their choice and present a short and engaging talk on the matter, before opening the discussion to anyone who happens to have it made it there on that day. Far from the kind of stuffy, Judeo-Christian focus that you might associate with philosophy, we cover a broad range of topics, on things of paramount importance to all of us today- that ground the way we act, the way we communicate and even the way we conceive the very world.

If you are at all interested, I implore you to come along to S4 on Wednesday lunchtimes. Your level of participation is very much up to you - if you want to just sit back and enjoy the ping pong of debate as ideas flurry around the room, that's wonderful, equally if you want to speak up and get your view across in the forty minutes, that would be spectacular, also. So please, do come along to the society even if just for one week, because you never know what may pique your interest, what may fascinate your brain and bring you on to trains of thoughts you never considered before.

T Coates

AGSB's anti-racism committee has been working tirelessly to organise the most black-history month events in the school's history in order to promote increased cultural inclusivity and education and to also celebrate influential black figures. From black history treasure hunts to a BHM- logo cake decorating competition, the month has been teeming with events. The most recent of these was the renowned African-Caribbean food sale on the lunchtime of Tuesday 19th October. Taking place in the Coleman Hall, the event was a carnival of epic proportions exhibiting the very best of traditional dishes, featuring rice and peas, salt fish fritters, North African cookies, curry goat and rice, and the students' favourites: jollof rice, fried chicken, Jamaican patties, Caribbean macaroni pie.

It is fair to say that the event was a huge success on a scale that even Levi Roots and Ainsley Harriott would be proud of! Thanks to the anti-racism ambassadors and Mrs Chapman and Dr Hepden; the food that they prepared in Period three was restaurant standard! It was great to see not just students of African and Caribbean heritages enjoying the food, but students of all backgrounds trying and loving potential new foods to them. We would also like to thank all the parents who contributed food and cutlery, a huge help towards the great cause of raising money for Kids of Colour. My top-tip for next year: bring plenty of Tupperware to take the food home!

M Inegbu



## AFRO-CARIBBEAN FOOD SALE







## IGNITION HACKATHON

To commemorate COP26, an international climate conference, I along with three other students took part in a Manchester wide climate initiative, known as the Ignition Hackathon. This event was informative, with various groups from schools all across Manchester were present. The aim was to increase awareness and encourage a more climate positive lifestyle.

After travelling to the University of Salford, we spent some time familiarising ourselves with the most significant effects Manchester would face in the coming few years, such as higher temperatures, increased flooding risk and air pollution. Of these effects the most serious concern is air pollution because Manchester already has one of the highest levels of carbon dioxide in the UK.

After winning a quiz, we split into groups and toured the University's living lab. This was the testing facility for their climate change solutions. The whole area was much greener and stood out, especially against the grey landscape of Salford. The walls were covered in a variety of greenery, and the roof has trees growing on it, all fed by an automatic, interconnected water system, which was built into the buildings and floor. These were easily integrated not only to new buildings, but also pre-existing ones, as they were light and cheap. These 'living walls', significantly reduced the temperature, something we saw first-hand using advanced infra-red technology.

One unexpected aspect was the mental health side, as a multitude of studies have shown that areas with more nature, significantly improve the mental health of those who live and commute there.

After a delicious vegan lunch, we listened to a talk about the industrial side of climate justice and learnt about how one of the best ways to improve the climate, is to vote in those who are willing to do so. Then we spent time developing our own methods of improving Manchester's eco friendliness. Each group presented to a panel of experts in law, research, and various other institutions. Many good ideas were raised, such as turning transport systems into small habitats for life, volunteering schemes to give back to the community, and our own ideas to perform some research on geo engineering. With Dan leading the way, we proposed a plan to use algal blooms to counter the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. We received lots of positive feedback and insight on how both individuals and groups can become more eco aware.

Overall, it was a very educational and enjoyable trip, and it inspired many of us to be more proactive in our own lives to aid the fight against climate change.

F Kotta



## EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES

This year our Year 7 students pulled out all the stops to compete in the annual September Hat Competition, run by the MFL Department to celebrate the European Day of Languages.

Students create or decorate a hat to represent the culture and language of a country of their choice and there was no shortage of ingenuity in doing this! We saw Eiffel Towers, windmills, Mexican hats, turbans, the Colosseum and fez hats. There were fabulous hats representing China, India, Pakistan, Egypt to name a few, with colourful additions of flags, maps, feathers and the language of the country represented, which students also used to greet staff around the school.

Form tutors had the difficult task of selecting their top five students, who won Competition House Points to contribute to the grand tally in July. Additionally, there was a themed assembly and throughout school there were tailored lessons and discussions around the inadequacies of translation software and how language skills are increasingly a differentiator in the jobs market.

We would like to extend a huge thank you for the efforts of the students and parents in making our 'Hat Day' a hugely enjoyable celebration of languages for all.

G Gordon





On Friday 17th December, each Year 7 form put forward a team aiming to take the honour of becoming the Year 7 football champions, whilst also raising money for charity.

The competition took place on the astro-turf, in the bright sunshine, with a large crowd watching and cheering on the action. Two groups of teams battled to secure their place in the grand final. Forms 7OL and 7RN played a close game to decide the outcome of the tournament. 7RN won 2-0, claiming the prestigious silver trophy.

All participants happily donated £2 to take part, raising around £130 in total. Thank you to the PE teachers for allowing the event to happen and for refereeing the games.

I Davies



## YEAR 7 SCORES FOR CHARITY



What a wonderful result the first Great Big Altrincham AGSB Auction achieved!

It has surprised everyone including the PFA and it was very humbling to have witnessed so much kindness and giving in the space of 5 weeks.

The intention was to experiment and trial the Auction of Promises concept to see how it would be received by school families, local businesses and residents. AGSB is a community school so it made sense to reach out to the surrounding areas to support and provide mental health workshops and education as well as to build stronger relationships beyond AGSB.

We focused a lot on mental health due to it being so heavily stigmatised and under resourced even though one in six children aged five to 16, identified as having a probable mental health problem in July 2020. That is a possibility of 5 children in each class. The effects of lockdown has exasperated many people's mental health so it's a cause that needs support and to be prioritised so that pupils can be better informed and have opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and feelings.

It would be great to be able to de-stigmatise the views of mental health and to learn that it is ok to be strong as well as vulnerable.

The PFA also chose to support The Teenage Cancer Trust as AGSB has had pupils that won and lost their battle with cancer. Each day, seven young people aged 13-24 hear the words "you have cancer". The Teenage Cancer Trust is dedicated to providing care for young cancer patients so that they and their family do not have to go through their treatment and journey alone.

Being passionate about what you are doing and really knowing the purpose breeds excitement, drive and results. Being part of a community, builds relations, inclusion, support and care.

A huge thank you to all that got involved. Let's continue growing our community and make AGSB Christmas Fair amazing!

I Harrison Tse

A very big thank you must also go to Irene, for her sheer hard work and dogged determination in getting people to donate, setting up the auction site and coordinating the 100+ promises with their winners. She is a force to be reckoned with! I hope she has time for a rest over Christmas!

H Drake

## PFA AUCTION OF PROMISES





# INTERVIEW WITH SARAH GRAHAM

Recently, I was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to interview Sarah Graham, a world-renowned photo-realistic artist, and a mental wellbeing advocate. I was extremely fascinated by her exceptional artwork when we studied it in Year 7 Art classes and never thought that I would get a chance to talk to her personally.

Sarah Graham works mainly in oil and acrylic paint to create a photorealistic effect. Her artwork mainly consists of either toys or sweets. She was born in Hitchin in 1977 and completed her Bachelors in Fine Arts from De Montfort University and has been pursuing her practice ever since. She has exhibited at many independent galleries and art fairs in the UK and overseas. Her work is widely available as limited-edition prints, alongside originals, throughout the UK.

She was kind enough to answer a few of my questions.

**V.S (Me): Who introduced you to art?**

**S.G (Sarah Graham):** I started oil painting at the age of eight and I was mainly motivated by my father's love of photography. He always encouraged me to paint and bought me all the supplies I needed. Whether it was photography or paints, he was always there for me. My mother wasn't as artistic as my father but many people from my mother's side of the family were extremely creative. Even when I was in nursery, my teachers used to notice my artistic and creative flair. So, my artistic journey started at quite a young age.

**V.S: Why are most of your paintings about sweets and toys?**

**S.G:** With my paintings, I try to convey a sort of nostalgic feeling that reminds the viewer of their childhood, hence the sweets and toys. It allows the painting to be more than just a piece of artwork, thus turning into a memory that people can cherish.

**V.S: Do you have a sweet tooth? Or would you rather paint sweets than eat them?**

**S.G:** I don't have that much of a sweet tooth, but as there are a bunch of Wsweets lying around my studio, I am starting to get tempted.

**V.S: What are your favourite and most time consuming artworks?**

**S.G:** I have two favourite artworks, the first is Somewhere Over the Rainbow (2009) and the second is Kaisers Rock (2012). My most time-consuming artwork was Sweet Escape Diptych (2014). It took many weeks and was across two canvases but was a fun challenge.

**V.S: Have you ever dabbled in any art mediums other than Acrylic Paint and Oil Paint?**

**S.G:** Not really, most of my artworks are made firstly in acrylic paint and then are refined with oil paints to both get a photorealistic look and create a nice blur effect. I once experimented with spray paints to recreate one of my paintings, 'Somewhere over the Rainbow' (2009) and the result looked pretty good!

**V.S: Is there any artist that specifically inspired you or was your role model?**

**S.G:** Oh yes, of course! My hero is Gerhard Richter, a German visual artist. I was inspired by his work during my university period. It was his painting 'Betty' that introduced me to photorealism; he's the reason I do what I do today. And I love all his work to this day, from his photo paintings to his abstracts, I just think he's an incredible painter.

**V.S: What are your thoughts on digital art?**

**S.G:** I was thinking of buying an iPad Pro and an Apple Pencil, but I feel that digital art doesn't do justice to the feel and authenticity of traditional art. One of the main aspects of my paintings is that they have a photorealistic look and aren't digitally manipulated. Use of any digital art programs such as Photoshop or Procreate would rob my paintings of the uniqueness they are known for.

**V.S: Can artistic skill be cultivated or is it natural?**

**S.G:** I think that there needs to be some sort of artistic spark in the person or a creative mindset for them to become a good artist from a young age. I have seen from other people that it is quite difficult to become a skilful artist without any prior interest or spark. Only a few manage to do it and it is no easy feat.

**V.S: How can parents help their children in their artistic journey?**

**S.G:** Similarly, to how my father encouraged my artistic journey, parents should support and promote their children's interest by giving them access and opportunities to use different artistic mediums. Another thing that occurs a lot is that parents are apprehensive towards their child taking Art GCSE, as they believe that it is extremely difficult to have a career in art and is safer to go down the typical route, for example, medical sector or engineering. However, if your child is extremely passionate about art then it is the right choice. Where there is a will, there is a way.

Many thanks to Sarah for the amazing interview and the great opportunity of being able to talk to such a talented, world-renowned artist. It was an interesting and enjoyable experience, and one I will not be soon to forget!

V Saini





# INTERVIEW WITH COVER TEACHERS

I recently had the pleasure of sitting down with Mrs Underwood and Mrs Walters who are 2 of our cover teachers. After gathering 10 intriguing questions, I arranged to have a COVID-safe interview at lunchtime. I found it interesting to see what it's like to be a cover teacher, the challenges, and the benefits.

**A.S (Me): How did you become a cover teacher at AGSB?**

**U (Mrs. Underwood):** I used to teach French and German at AGSB for fifteen years before I left to take time to travel with my husband. When I returned, being a cover teacher worked quite nicely.

**W (Mrs. Walters):** I used to work in Marketing before training to become a teacher in 2010. After a while, I wanted to get rid of the paperwork and do more of the part I love, teaching. I knew Mr Gartside and he needed someone at short notice and that is how I ended up at AGSB.

**A.S: What makes cover teaching different to teaching time-tabled lessons?**

**U:** Cover teaching is often a one-off lesson which I deliver whilst in standard teaching, you must plan and prepare lessons. I prefer cover teaching now as it fits nicely with my schedule.

**W:** No preparation! In cover teaching, I mostly find out if I have to come in at 7.30 in the morning unless of course it is a planned absence. AGSB leaves great cover work and I get to leave at 3.25. Cover teaching allows me to do more teaching which is the part that I love the most.

**Do you find yourself learning new things during cover lessons?**

**U:** More so in KS4 lessons but still in some KS3 lessons.

**W:** I find myself learning a something interesting here and there.

**A.S: Is it difficult to teach from a textbook?**

**U:** As a regular teacher, your textbook is your base and then you add things like videos and worksheets to make it more interactive.

**W:** Not if you have an initial understanding, the main thing to do is read the textbook before the students do!

**A.S: Do you prefer being a cover teacher or would you like to be a regular teacher?**

**U:** I enjoy both, however, at this point in my career, cover teaching gives me more flexibility.

**W:** A cover teacher, no paperwork!

**A.S: How do you feel about the respect that teachers give you?**

**U:** I feel that I am quite lucky as I do most of my cover teaching at AGSB and the students are respectful.

**W:** My style of teaching is quite relaxed which is reflected in my lessons however I do expect you to do the work.

**A.S: What are your favourite subjects to teach?**

**U:** Modern Foreign Languages since I used to teach French and German, but I also really enjoy teaching Philosophy and Ethics because of the insightful discussions that I have with students.

**W:** Science because that's my background. I have degree in Applied Chemistry, but I have A Levels in Maths, Physics, Chemistry, General Studies and, Psychology - which I did for fun by taking evening classes.

**A.S: What is the most difficult subject to teach?**

**U:** Science, it is not that I don't enjoy teaching science, I find it interesting but it's just more difficult than other subjects.

**W:** It would be Religion and Philosophy since I haven't studied it at all. I'd like to have a knowledge base which I simply don't have in R&P.

**A.S: What has been your best cover lesson?**

**U:** I recently did a block of teaching in the English department and the students authored short stories which we shared at the end and the quality was just fantastic.

**W:** I do not have one. I enjoy most of, if not all my cover lessons. There isn't a such thing as a best.

**A.S: What inspired you to get into teaching?**

**U:** I taught English in Germany for a few years, and it inspired me, seeing the progress that the students made.

**W:** I wanted to try something new and spoke to friend. I then got a degree in teaching, in 2010.

**A.S: What is your day-to-day life as a cover teacher?**

**U:** It's varied. I could be teaching English, Maths or even Computer Science whilst other days I could be at home.

**W:** It's great as I enjoy the flexibility that I get as a cover teacher.

That was an impressive set of responses. When Mrs Walter's said, ' however I do expect you to do the work.', that might be a hint for me! It is always great to see complete opposite answers with Philosophy and Ethics being one of Mrs Underwood's favourite subjects to teach whilst the most difficult for Mrs Walters. Our cover teachers work so hard to try and give us the same lesson as our normal subject teachers and sometimes we forget that. We often fail to acknowledge the hard work of the cover teachers and this interview really reminded me of that. I really enjoyed being able to complete a face-to-face interview again and thank you to Mrs Walters and Mrs Underwood for taking the time to answer my questions.

A Sadiq





# Messages Mrs Chapman Details

Have you always had red hair?

Yes – I had really gingery hair as a child, and it's darkened over the years. I used to dye it all sorts of colours, but I've come to enjoy being a redhead, so now I keep it natural.



Where on earth is that accent from?

It's a mix of Yorkshire and Geordie, from spending a very long time in Bradford and Newcastle/Gateshead.

What's your new office like?

I'm very lucky to have gone from teaching in the library for years to having E7 as a teaching room, the English office in the new block and the shared Head of Year office near the old Library. All three are great, but E7 is the one I've decorated for myself (and it's where all my marking is) so I spend the most time in there.

What's the most bizarre thing that a parent has asked you to do as HOY?

Get their son out of bed - I've had that a few times. I've also been asked to overrule a teacher's grade with a higher one a few times.

What is your favourite children's book?

I really loved Charlotte's Web by E B White. I love an underdog and that story is full of them. I was also super into the Harry Potter books and was one of the millions of teenagers queueing up for the midnight releases and then missing school to read them to avoid spoilers.

What is the best thing about English?

Done well, it's an exploration of the human condition. No topic is off the table and every skill takes you a step closer to understanding others. I also think that skilful communication is one of the most important skills anyone can hone, and that's a cornerstone of English Language.

What is so special about Altrincham Grammar School for Boys, the staff, and students here, and what role did they have on bringing you here to AGBS?

I joined AGBS at quite a low ebb, to be honest. I had come from another school which I really didn't enjoy and was considering retraining to do something new if it didn't work out. I love my job now. It's a pleasure to teach such genuinely motivated students and I love being Head of Year 11.



Have you ever been on live TV? If so, on what occasion?

Not live TV, but I was in quite a few episodes of Emmerdale and Wilmot growing up. My school (Benton Park in Rawdon) was used quite frequently as a filming location, so 4 people at the top of the register in each year group got to miss lessons and eat in the canteen when they were filming. My surname started with a B, so I always got to be in the background scenes.







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