



# THE TORCH

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"Meliora Spectare"  
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# CHRISTMAS IS COMING

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By Ellisia Bowman, Year 9

It's time to cosy up in a blanket, put the heating on and grab some hot chocolate as the winter times come around the corner. Christmas songs have started playing as people get ready for the busiest time of the year.

Christmas is a beautiful time with lights hanging down streets, trees being decorated, and carols being sung in the frosty air, but it can be spent bustling through

stores and searching for that perfect Christmas present - which can be stressful for adults!

Christmas movies are taking over, so grab your family or friends, get cosy on the sofa and get your favourite food and drink out. Throw on your favourite Christmas movie and huddle up with the heating on!

So, the term comes to an end as Christmas comes around the bend. I wish you some Christmas cheer, and a Happy New Year!

## Christmas Word Search

Created by Ashli Coggin, Year 9

Find the words and return to Miss Taylor for an ePraise point.

- |         |         |
|---------|---------|
| Tree    | Advent  |
| Baubles | Present |
| Santa   | Turkey  |
| Snow    | Rudolph |
| Angel   | Elf     |



# Message from the Principal

Dear Parent / Carer,

## School Events

We have just had two highly successful evenings of 'Cinderella', this year's school pantomime. Written, directed and produced by Mr McHale, Head of Drama, but supported by others in the Performing Arts faculty, it was immensely entertaining, and has involved over 60 Wath students. I am very grateful to all the parents, students and staff that came along to support all the hard work and preparation that goes in to putting on such a grand event. Prior to this there was a matinee performance, performed for future students, from local feeder primary schools.

I write as we look forward to two further significant events in the life of the school. On 17 December we have our annual Christmas Concert, where many of our gifted musicians and singers will perform a range of traditional and more contemporary music; and where there will be hearty audience participation with the more familiar carols, particularly to the rousing traditional finale of 'Twelve Days of Christmas', complete with actions. Then on 18 December we have our Year 13 Presentation Evening, when most of last year's final year students should be available to join us for the annual presentation of certificates and awards. We look forward to hearing how everyone is doing after joining the world beyond school. We are delighted that a large proportion of the year group have already indicated their desire to join us on that evening.

At the very end of last half term, the Performing Arts (PA) faculty hosted a Murder Mystery Evening. With the title 'Till Death Do Us Part', it was set within the grounds of a mansion house, on the occasion of a wedding, that ended in a murder. The wedding attire in the audience, suitably seated for the wedding banquet, certainly added to the atmosphere as we tried to work out 'who done it' from a cast of sixth form drama students. The acting was of the highest calibre and thank you to all the staff from the PA faculty for hosting such an entertaining evening.

The Main Hall was packed on 14 November for our 'New Sixth Evening', where prospective students came to hear about the opportunities on offer for next year's Year 12. It was very encouraging to see the number of students that had been attracted from other, neighbouring schools across the region. It is very



pleasing to note that the sixth form at Wath is held in such high regard. On 28 November we had our 'Year 11 Presentation Evening' where certificates, prizes and awards were made to last year's Year 11 students. It was lovely to welcome so many of them back together again as a year group, with students pursuing training and courses at local colleges joining with those who had moved into our own sixth form.

## Trial Exams

As the end of term approaches, it is a very busy time for students preparing for external examinations. Year 11 students have recently completed GCSE Trial Examinations in English and Maths. The Trial Exams are very good practice for the external exams that begin after the Easter break, only just over 4 months away, and so there will be further Trials in students' other subjects from 13 January. It is a very important time for Year 11 as they prepare for exams that will determine what options are open to them post-16. We hope that as many as possible will be successful and will be able to take advantage of the courses that we offer in our own sixth form. Following the Year 11 exams, Year 13 students have now had their own Trial Exams.

## Fund-Raising

Across our school community, we continue to focus on raising academic standards and opportunities, remaining fully committed to our aim of ensuring that all of our students receive a high quality educational experience. However it is also good to report on the fund-raising activities that staff and students have been involved in over this last half term, including a bake sale for 'Children in Need' and the sale of handmade Christmas decorations in aid of 'Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice'.

Premature closures due to bad weather

As we now enter the winter season, and the weather deteriorates, may I please take the opportunity to remind parents that there may be occasions when emergencies make it necessary for students to be sent home prematurely and that, in these circumstances, parents should have advised their children of necessary care arrangements. We would of course strive to avoid these circumstances but we must plan for all contingencies.

End of term arrangements

Individual tutor groups are currently busy putting together the final touches to their hampers for our annual Christmas Hamper Competition. Once the judging has taken place, the hampers will be distributed to senior citizens living in the local area and to a few residential centres. Thank you if you have been able to support this by sending in such as a tin of food, bottle of drink or book. There will be a prize for the best hamper in each year group and a trophy for 'best in school'.

This year we are hosting a Christmas Lunch for all students on Friday 20 December. Students will attend their normal lessons until lunchtime; they will then follow a rotation of lunch, Character Education sessions with their tutor group and House competitions. The last day of term will finish at the normal time of 2.40pm.

The lunch will be free of charge and will be based in the Main Hall. We will have three sittings of 650 students and staff. All students will engage in the festivities in their tutor group and enjoy good conversation around the dinner table. There will be table-cloths, crackers, bunting, banners, Christmas Jumpers, Christmas songs, table games, snow machines, quizzes etc. We want all students to engage in the festivities and create positive school memories which last a life time.

To raise money for the NSPCC, in return for a small donation, students can wear a Christmas Jumper instead of their blazer on this day. Students must still wear their shirt and tie under their Christmas Jumper and can wear their blazer over the Christmas Jumper if they wish. Donations will be collected on entry to the Christmas Lunch.

On behalf of all staff members at the Academy, I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming all students back into the Academy on Monday 6

January at the normal start time.

Yours sincerely,

J Taylor

Principal

## News in Brief

### Dates for the Diary

Some important forthcoming dates:

- 28 January: Year 10 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers
- 4 February: Year 8 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers
- 11-13 February: Dance & Movement Evenings
- 14 February: INSET day: school closed to students
- 17 February: half-term break begins
- 24 February: new half term begins (for students and staff)
- 25 February: Year 11 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers
- 3 March: Year 9 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers.

### Y7 Science Club

Our Y7 Scientists continue their practical work each Thursday after school, they have done some fabulous dissections and chemical reactions this half term. All Y7 students are welcome, we would love to see you there! Every Monday in F41 from 2:40 – 3:30.



### Y11 Science Revision

Well done to all the Y11 students who attend the after school Science revision every week in the sixth form study area! Some fabulous work focusing on paper one Biology, Chemistry and Physics has been completed. Science after school revision continues every Thursday 2:40 – 3:40, we would love to see you there!

# Latest News and Updates

## Updates from the Science Faculty

The Science faculty have had a very busy half term with a whole array of opportunities beyond the classroom to support student progress and inspiring students about Science and the endless opportunities within a STEM world! Here are some of the highlights.

### Y13 Biology Field Trip

By James Ball, Year 13

We arrived at Cranedale centre after 2 hours on the coach, after we got settled in and put our stuff away we were taught in a class where the staff informed us about what we would be doing that day; after the class, we had our lunch. The groups were decided and we set off towards Bridlington coast with our equipment bags on a minibus, we arrived after around an hour of travel. We set up an interrupted transect belt over the sand dunes where we measured ground humidity, soil compaction, plant diversity, highest plant height and % ground cover etc, this was done by using the provided equipment in the tool bag.



After collecting our data over the sand dunes, it was time to get back to the centre, where we had some free time to prepare and relax before we all had dinner. We then gathered in the classroom again.

On the second half of the day, we did dissection of Owl Pellets. Since Owls not have teeth like humans, they swallow the animal whole, and spit out pellets. These can be dissected to reveal skull and bones of animals which they have consumed. After dissecting them we put them under a microscope and mounted our findings to take home. We worked in classrooms using microscopes until

8:45pm. That concluded the first day of Cranedale.

On the second day we underwent our required practical. This involved looking at desiccation (time spent out of the sea) of different organisms. We planned our experiment, found our groups, chose our organism, and set off to Filey Brigg. We conducted sampling and investigated percentage cover, percentage abundance of amount of certain seaweed, barnacles and limpets in the area using different sampling techniques. Then, we went back to the centre to analyse our data using statistical tests. This marked the end of our time in Cranedale, as we packed up and headed back to the school in the late afternoon. The visit gave us vast knowledge of ecology and allowed us to complete sampling techniques in a context that is often used within exam papers!

### Third Year Medical Students in WA Science Faculty

WA Science faculty are lucky to have three fantastic third year medical students from the University of Sheffield working with us for four weeks. They have been busy delivering assemblies, NHS careers talks to Y8, 10 and 11, Science club, supporting Y10 and Y11 students in lessons, helping our prospective sixth form medical students with UCAS applications and preparation for interviews and delivering presentations to the sixth form about university life.

### A Level Chemistry Science Live – Whitworth Hall Manchester

By Leila Duke, Year 13

Year 12 and 13 Chemists enjoyed a day in Manchester, at the Whitworth Hall. Many prestigious scientists gave lectures on how they've used chemistry to excel in pioneering projects. Prof Andrea Sella, Dr Philip Ball, Dr Suze Kundu, Prof Lucy Carpenter and Professor Peter Atkins all attended the event, alongside Michelle Oldfield, who gave useful exam tips to enable us to reach the top A\* band. Overall, the jam-packed day provided us with an insight with what us young chemists are capable of doing with our futures.

### A Level Biology Science Live – Whitworth Hall Manchester

Our A level Biology students were inspired by the lectures at Whitworth Hall in Manchester. They listened to cutting edge Biology lectures on: 'Human Progress', 'Is Man Just Another Mammal?', 'A Life in Science', 'Revenge of the Microbes' and 'The Staggering Diversity of Planet Earth'. Students were particularly inspired by Professor Robert

# from Wath Academy

Winston.

A Level Physics Science Live – Whitworth Hall Manchester

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Our A level Physics students were inspired by the Physicists lecturing at Whitworth Hall for the Physics Science live, they were enthralled by lectures on Quantum Physics, Nuclear Physics, Gravity and Plastic Electronics.

Y12 Royal Society of Chemistry Christmas Lecture

By Alex Boardman, Year 12

On Wednesday 4th December the Sixth Form Chemists went on a trip down to the University of Sheffield for an interesting lecture by Dr Tim Craggs about how light can be used to measure really small objects. The main focus of the lecture was to explain how cells replicate without causing damage to the body.

The lecture started with a demonstration of how the width of a human hair can be measured using a only a laser and a piece of cardboard. A gap was created in the cardboard and the hair suspended (hanging) in the middle of the hole. The lecturer then pointed the laser at the hair and a diffraction pattern was created of the board (regular pattern of light and dark). The distance between 2 of the light fringes was approximated and a rough approximation of the width of human hair calculated which was very close to the actual value...

In the main part of the lecture Tim began to explain how florescent particles absorb light and how when different florescent particles get closer together they would no longer be florescent when a strong laser is shone upon them, using this fact the movement of molecules can be calculated and simulated as the dyes are placed on the

structure of interest. The research showed how proteins in the human body check for errors and correct them as needed. Learning how cells check and repair themselves could be essential in the fight against cancer and antibiotic resistant drugs.

Overall, the lecture was very interesting and accessible for all students, having some crossover from all 3 of the main domains of science: the diffraction and the way light works (for Physics), how the proteins have dyes attached to them and the measuring of the fluorescence of the dyes over time (for Chemistry), and the replication and checking of the DNA in the cells by proteins (for Biology).

## A Visit from Kevin

By Thomas Armitage, Year 8

Kevin has been coming to our school for a few weeks now and has been talking to us about many things, including how we receive information and how we can improve on it.

How do we process information and how do we remember? There are many different tactics to remembering and understanding how it can affect your future and your life.

However, in my opinion, I do not agree with Kevin that “bad memory” is entirely down to poor “listening skills”, as you can listen very well but forget things over time. This is why good note-taking is also so important, which is something many tutors have been looking at on Fridays recently. Tutors have introduced three different note-taking ideas: the Cornell method, mind-mapping and outlining. This links to what Kevin has been trying to say as we can listen but then forget the information given to us. If this happens, your note-taking ideas come in as you can refer to them and remember key information.

## Musical Success

Congratulations to the following on their recent external exam success:

- Freya Mannion Grade 3 Violin Merit
- Abi King Grade 3 Violin Pass
- Lucy Hepworth Grade 4 Piano Pass
- Rebecca Swift Grade 6 Clarinet Distinction
- Keeleigh Davies Grade 1 Piano Merit

# It's Panto Season Yet Again...

By Emily Balaiss, Year 12

It's coming up to that festive season again, and we all know what that means... it's panto time at Wath Academy! Over two months of learning lines, rehearsing and staging scenes have gone into making this pantomime a possibility, and this year it's the classic story of 'rags to riches'... *Cinderella*.

Now, I'm sure you're familiar with the classic story of *Cinderella* but if you're not (where have you been?) here is the story in a nutshell: a young, poor girl (Cinderella) is living with her evil stepmother and two stepsisters. They treat Cinderella like rubbish and when they find out that there will be a royal ball held at the palace, they try and ensure that Cinderella won't attend the it. Long story short, Cinderella ends up going to the ball – with help from a fairy godmother – meets the prince, falls in love and when the clock strikes midnight, she runs away, leaving the prince to chase down this mysterious girl, who just so happened to leave one of her glass slippers on the steps of the palace. When the prince announces he will be attending every house in the kingdom, he finally finds the girl he met at the ball, they get married and live happily ever after...whoopee! But our production was a bit different. With characters and references from *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*, *The Simpsons*, *Red Riding Hood* and so many more, this panto wasn't one to miss.

We managed to ask some of the cast members a range of questions about the show.

Kirin Howat, who plays Prince Charming, says that his favourite scene to perform was the ball scene because it's so funny. The best part of playing Prince Charming was that he is a bit mardy 'just like me', while the hardest challenge he had to overcome was finding his character's personality initially, as well as capturing every funny part—he hopes that everyone will still be thinking about how funny the ugly sisters are while they drive home! Kirin wanted to be involved with this production because he likes performing on stage.

For Jake Grantham, who plays Cinderella's father Horace, the best scene to perform was the haunted bench scene because it is really funny and iconic. He really enjoyed playing the part of Horace because of the line "I've got a sausage" (those of you who came to watch it will understand!), whereas the hardest challenge to overcome was trying not to laugh and learning lines. It was also quite tough to bring the script to life, especially when there wasn't an actual script during the

rehearsals—and when having to sift through Mr McHale's many typos! Jake has done a lot of theatre outside of school but this was only his second school production; he signed up to be involved with more. Jake hopes that the audience will leave the production thinking, "Man, that was fun, and that midget who played Cinderella's dad was handsome!" He also said the production would certainly bring something new to the story, since it is performed by kids—and that will certainly bring a sense of youth to it! He felt that people who love a laugh would love the production, because it is full of many funny jokes and surprising moments.

Acacia Wear, who plays Buttons (Cinderella's trusted friend), also really enjoyed being part of the haunted bench scene, because it was so funny (although it was a challenge to fit on such a small bench!). Her favourite thing about performing as Buttons was that it gave her permission to be hyper, and it also allowed her to have scenes with the ugly sisters, who were always unpredictable and hilarious. She said that people who love to laugh are going love this show, and she hopes the audience would be thinking about how amazing everyone was whilst driving home. For her, the most challenging thing was to act over the top, but she wanted to be in the performance was because she loves to act and pantomime is a good challenge. She said that this production is bringing something new to the story and she feels the brightness of Button's clothes and how many buttons were on her waistcoat are going to surprise the audience the most.

The haunted bench scene was also a favourite scene to perform for Savanna Davis, who plays Doris (a villager), because she found it fun to delve into the mysteries of the paranormal. Even though Doris doesn't have many lines, Savanna enjoyed playing the part because she got to react to what was happening elsewhere on stage. She said that the hardest challenge to overcome was not forgetting her lines or script—so at least there weren't too many! She feels that the pantomime is perfect for someone who loves fairy tales and theatre in general—and she hopes people will drive away from the panto remembering how fun it was. Savanna wanted to get involved with this production because it's a great way to meet new people and she recommends it to anyone looking for a new challenge.

Last, but certainly not least, Joe Unijat (who plays the villager Terry) concurred with everyone else that his favourite scene to perform was the haunted bench scene

# Oh No, It Isn't... Oh Yes, It Is!

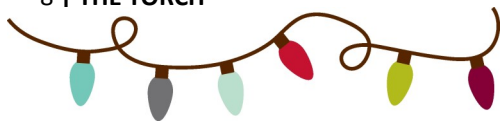


because it was really funny (I guess the cast really loved that haunted bench scene!). For him, the best part of playing Terry was that he got to be part of the ball and wedding scenes and got to help show what was going on with his reactions. He said that anyone who loves Disney is going to love this panto. Like some others, the hardest thing for him was learning lines, especially figuring out which actions to go with them. He decided to take part in the pantomime because he likes acting and being in school productions.

We hope you all bought your tickets for this wonderful pantomime because it truly was spectacular. The entire cast performed with true professionalism, delivering a huge range of set pieces and gags (from choreographed dances to riffing on ITV's *Take Me Out*), and the Ugly Sisters are sure to become comedy legend for years to come!

***Photographs (from top to bottom): the whole cast; the Ugly Sisters and their non-too impressed step-father, Horace; the two lovers; from ghostly to animal, the panto had it all; the Fairy Godmother and the evil Stepmother; writer and director, Mr McHale; and the King and Queen.***





# Seasonal Specials:

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## Welcome to your very own 'unconventional' Christmas...

By Nicole Ellis, Year 13

Whether you class yourself as a Christmas-orientated person, or more of a summer fan, below are some ideas for gifts, movies, and decorations that won't just work for traditional Christmas lovers, but for those who want to branch out and open their minds, to trying out some 'alternative Christmas' suggestions instead!

### Christmas gifts

*Traditional ideas:* body care sets, Perfume/Aftershave sets, Play Station/Xbox games, Phones, designer jewellery or clothing, like Nike and Nomination.

*Alternative suggestions:* concert tickets, a pre-paid Spa day, a signed item from a celebrity, a scrapbook or a video filled with special memories.

### Christmas movies

*Traditional ideas:* *The Elf*, *The Grinch*, *Home Alone*, *Love*

*Actually, Santa Paws.*

*Alternative suggestions:* *Narnia*, *Meet the Parents*, *Shrek*, *Daddy's Home*.

### Christmas decorations

*Traditional ideas:* Wreath, garlands, fairy lights, ornaments, mini nativity displays, scented candles.

*Alternative suggestions:* fluffy throws/pillows Christmas themed (i.e. Christmas colours like white/burgundy), lanterns, paper snowflakes.

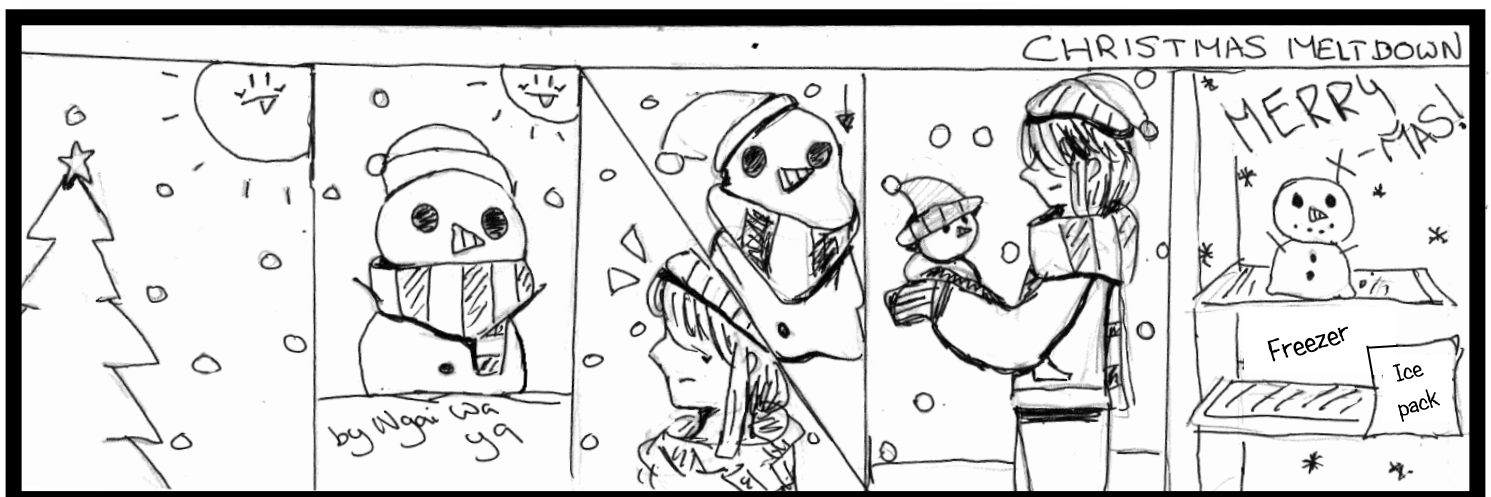
### Christmas activities

*Traditional ideas:* Christmas Markets, ice skating, skiing, Christmas cookie baking, Christmas hampers, going to see Christmas lights, buying Christmas pyjamas.

*Alternative suggestions:* A trip to Alton Towers or any other theme park, going to the cinema, the zoo, walking at sites such as Elsecar park.

### Christmas dinner

*Traditional ideas:* yorkshire pudding, stuffing, turkey (or





# Festive Fun and Advice



goose), gravy, mash, roast potatoes, apple sauce, carrots, Brussel sprouts, cranberry sauce followed by Christmas pudding for dessert.

*Alternative suggestions:* Jacket potatoes, Sheperd's Pie, Pancetti, Vegan Wellington (suitable for vegans, vegetarians, and lactose intolerant individuals), Smoked salmon with roast potatoes (good gluten free option).

Although presents, food, and activities tend to be a key highlight around this festive time of the year, let's not forget the true meaning behind Christmas: to appreciate all of the great people in our lives, whom we love, remembering all of the good that they've done for us! At the end of the day, remembering to be kind and generous to ourselves but most importantly to other people, is what really counts. That being said, we would like to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and we hope that you all have a fantastic new year!

## Santa's Chronicles: Part II

By Maxton Hutchinson, Year 8

On Christmas Eve, Santa was flying over London. When his reindeer grew tired, Santa began to look around. He saw a forest a couple of mile away, so he increased speed to avoid being seen by the locals.

"Settle down, girl," he said to Dasher. "Take a rest."

He ran to the back of the sleigh and grabbed his sack of presents. Santa ran as fast as he possibly could with the gigantic bag on his back to the nearest car. Luckily for him, it was a convertible so he could easily 'borrow' it. He opened the glove box to check for some keys they were not there. "Only one other place they could be." He pulled down the visor. The keys fell onto his lap. He put them in the ignition and turned. The car roared as the engine started.

"Why are people dumb enough to leave their keys?" Santa asked himself.

He began to drive down the motorway, but after delivering to a few houses, he heard some police sirens. He wondered why they didn't pass him so he just ignored them... little did he know he was way over the speed limit.

Santa came to the end of the motorway when he realised the sirens were still behind him. He pulled over to let them pass but they just pulled over behind him, so he got out with his sack and went to the house.

After delivering, he turned around and the police were there. He looked at them and proceeded to the car only to realise they had clamped the wheel. He turned back around to them, and they held up the cuffs. They put him in the back of the police car and drove him to the station.

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Two hours later, a police officer opened the cell and brought him to the interview room. They asked him who he was and what he was doing in all those houses, explaining that he was charged with speeding and breaking and entering. He told them that he was Santa but they didn't believe him.

Just as they were about to drag him back to the cell, two elves hopped up onto the desk (Jeff and Jane). They said together in a squeaky voice, "We're here for Santa."

The police officer broke out into a fit of laughter. When she finally recovered, she took a closer look at the two elves, suddenly thinking back to her childhood when she saw two elves as she was falling asleep on Christmas Eve. She realised she had met these two elves before, which meant that Santa was telling the truth.

She rushed to take the cuffs off Santa and gathered some of the police officers to deliver some presents, to help Santa to make up for lost time.

After they had finished delivering the presents, Santa revealed a special present for each police officer and they all thanked him and apologised for the mistaken arrest!

Santa stepped outside and gave a sharp whistle. The officers followed him, wondering what he was doing.

Until they heard bells...



# Media and Review:

## Reading For Pleasure

By Alexandra Cook, Year 8

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Recently, we have had a change in our English lessons. Throughout both Year 7 & 8, we are going to be having one full lesson of reading. You may be confused as to why exactly we are having an hour of reading for joy, so we are going to have a chat with Miss Taylor from the English department. After asking multiple questions, here were her answers.

**Alex:** So, do you yourself enjoy reading?

**Miss Taylor:** I love reading. I try my best to read every day—usually before bed, because it's a good way to relax and unwind.

**A:** How exactly can people improve their English by reading?

**T:** If you read you are constantly seeing examples of a good piece of writing as well as things you could include in your own writing such as punctuation, paragraphs and a wider vocabulary. Reading also lets you know more about the world. You can step into the mind of a person very different from yourself, or learn about a topic you knew nothing about before.

**A:** Finally, why should people read?

**T:** To get all the benefits that we talked about as well as the pure enjoyment of it. Also, sadly some students have not found the right book, so they believe they do not like reading or cannot do it. We hope to change this!

So, in all, reading is for development of English skills and for pure pleasure!

## *Spiderman: Into the Spider-Verse* sequel confirmed

By Grace Clowrey, Year 9



Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse   
@SpiderVerse

Follow

April 8, 2022  #SpiderVerse



The sequel to *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* has been confirmed for 2022.

In a tweet by Sony, the sequel is set to be released on 8th April 2022. *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* followed teenage Miles Morales and his journey to becoming the new Spiderman, and meeting other web-slinging heroes from different realities – like Gwen Stacy and Spider-Ham.

At the end of the first film, each web-slinger found their way back to their own dimension, so will the Spider heroes get back together? What do you think?

## Finale Book Review

By Molly Hammerton, Year 12

As the title probably suggests, *Finale* is the final book in the *Caraval* trilogy by Stephanie Garber, which revolve around two sisters – Scarlett and Donatella Dragna – and their fantastic adventures in the magical event known as *Caraval*, run by a mysterious sorcerer known only as *Legend*. In the previous two books, we have seen the event twice through the eyes of the two sisters; the first book, *Caraval*, follows Scarlett, the older of the two, through the twisted world of the competition as she races to beat the other competitors with her new companion, Julian, to the sought after prize, which is more precious to her than she first believed. The second book, *Legendary*, is from

# Books, Films and More



Donatella's (Tella's) perspective through the special addition of Caraval for the Empress Elantine's birthday. However, there are darker forces at work as ancient beings known as The Fates are becoming stronger and are beginning to break free of their prison, an enchanted Deck of Destiny, the first of whom being the Prince of Hearts (known as Jacks).

Now, onto Finale. Well, let's just say it starts out as a bit of a mess (and that's not the writing, which is simply gorgeous) because of the small problem of the evil powerful beings – the Fates – running rampant through the city and causing suffering to the people. Not only that, but our main characters are experiencing their own dramas between each other as they must battle not only the Fates, but their own hearts in order to overcome the obstacles in their way.

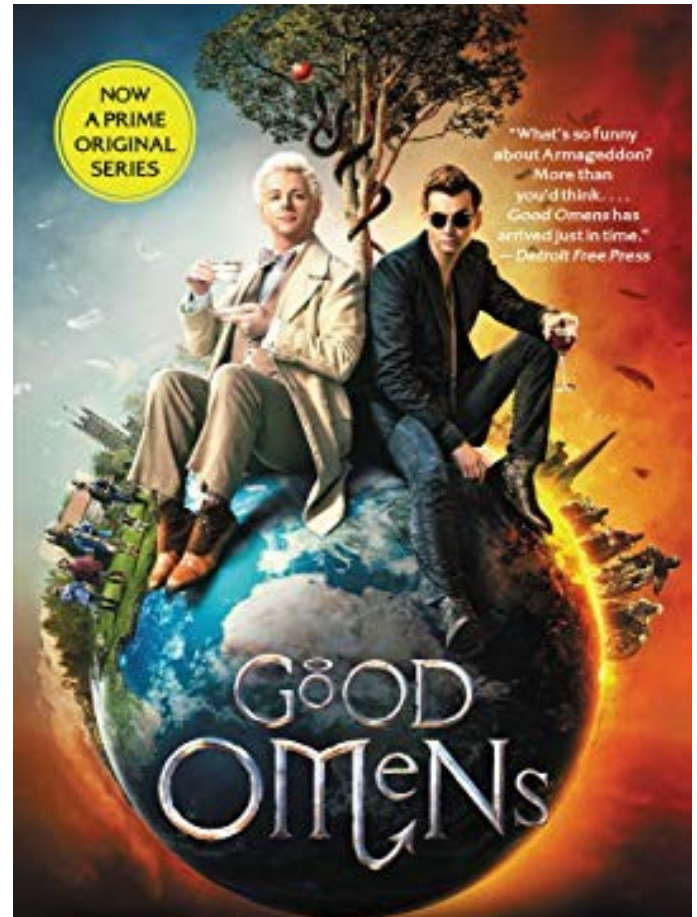
Overall, I adore this series as each book is better than the last and this final instalment is truly a worthy ending. The descriptions in this book are incredibly beautiful and unique as Garber uses similes and metaphors which create vivid images without being stereotypical (I'm looing at you 'as swift as a fox'). Not only is the setting easy to build in your mind, but the characters are also believable and multi-layered, which the reader is able to peel back throughout the novel and discover something new about them in practically each chapter. Moreover, the plot is magical and simple to follow, yet still manages to have depth and keeps the reader intrigued throughout the novel; I truly did not want to put the book down and took every opportunity I had to read it. However, I advise anyone who wants to read the book to read the rest of the series first as this novel relies on the others to explain the plot. I highly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys high fantasy novels and those who enjoy meticulously described worlds which seem almost a reality.



## Book of the Month

*Good Omens* – by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman

Reviewed by Ellisia Bowman and Grace Clowrey,  
Year 9



*Good Omens* is a book about an angel and a demon who band together to prevent Armageddon. Aziraphale, the angel, and Crowley, the demon, are "hereditary enemies", but, after 6000 years on earth together, they have become, dare we say, friends.

We highly recommend this book for people who like the fantasy, adventure, and sci-fi genres (with a romantic twist). It manages to be hilariously funny yet still stereotypically British. It is full of twists and turns, with sad parts and jokes dispersed throughout.

We hope that you will consider reading this book – you won't regret it! The book is available from retailers such as WHSmith and Amazon.

# News, Politics and Current Affairs:

## Is it acceptable to pierce a baby's ears?

By Olivia Wydell, Year 10

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Ear piercings in young children is extremely popular – even Kylie Jenner pierced her baby, Stormi's, ears, but should it be so highly encouraged? After all, the child cannot give consent if they do not understand what is going and it is their own body and not the parent's. Parents often pierce their children's ears because it looks aesthetically pleasing but is this really reason to put a child through so much fear and pain?

There have been petitions to have an age limit on ear piercings in the UK. Edward Timpson has called for a minimum legal age requirement to be introduced so it's illegal for babies and toddlers to get their ears pierced.

A common misconception of child ear piercings is that it is completely safe and there are no risks, but there are several things that can go wrong when piercing a baby's

ears, especially since they have such vulnerable immune systems.

There is a risk of infection in the child's ears, especially since their immune systems are weaker at a younger age. These minor infections can eventually turn into more serious infections caused by bacteria called pseudomonas and staphylococcus. There is also a theoretical risk of viral infections like hepatitis B, C, and HIV.

Allergies can also become a problem; if metals like nickel or cobalt are used, there is a risk of an allergic reaction. This can be avoided by using a stainless steel or titanium needle. But even if this is checked by the parent, there is always a chance that a nickel or cobalt needle has been used, causing potential allergic reactions, and leading to possible complications.

In my opinion, there should be a minimum age requirement for ear piercings, because children cannot give their consent. Furthermore, complications may arise which can cause the child harm, either mentally or physically; it is therefore more trouble than it is worth just to improve a child's appearance. And if it is just for looks, shouldn't a parent be happy with their child either way?

I did a survey of opinions here at Wath, asking the question: "Do you think that it is acceptable to pierce a baby's ears?" An overwhelming 80% said no.

## Election Day Brings a Landslide Majority for Conservatives

On 12th December, the nation took to the polls once again. The outcome: a Conservative government.

Electioneering has become alarmingly familiar phenomenon in recent years since Conservative David Cameron won the 2015 election with promise of a future referendum on Britain's place in or out of the European Union. This led to the 2016 referendum and, when the vote did not go in Cameron's way, he stood down to be replaced with Theresa May. She again invited the nation to speak out in 2017, and her majority was badly damaged in this new election, leaving Parliament in stasis as politicians squabbled about how best to deliver the outcome of the referendum. However, when Theresa May stepped down on 27th March, Boris Johnson stepped in. Similarly stymied by the minority government, he announced another election with the promise that a vote for him would "get Brexit done".

### THE TORCH Journalists

This edition was produced by Isobel Clowrey, Thomas Armitage, Maxton Hutchinson, Emily Rodgers, Alexandra Cook, Isobelle Fenton, Lola Billingham, Grace Clowrey, Ngai Wa Yuen, Ellisia Bowman, Ashli Coggin, Elena Cretu, Olivia Wydell, Caitlin Martin-Smith, Molly Hammerton-Woodhouse, Emily Balaiss, Nicole Ellis and Miss Taylor. Thanks also to James Ball, Leila Duke, Alex Boardman, Miss Taylor, Mr Bishop and Miss Perry.

If you are interested in helping to produce THE TORCH, come along to G11 on Thursday afternoons, 2.40-3.40 pm, or see Miss Taylor for more information.

# Wath Students Speak Out

The country, it seems, responded to this message. As polling stations closed at 10pm, the exit polls announced a huge Conservative majority, which was later confirmed after the votes were frantically counted. The Conservative party won 365 seats, which is a gain of 47 in comparison to the previous election. This means that Boris Johnson, in his own words, has a “stonking mandate” to do what he wants. This means that it will be easy for him to get new policies and laws approved in the House of Commons, because he will have the support of the majority of politicians.

Labour’s results were particularly disappointing for the party because they lost a number of seats in the North of England, where they have maintained a hold for many decades. Labour will need to analyse exactly what went wrong for their party, and their leader Jeremy Corbyn had promised to step down, though not until after a “period of reflection” where a new leader can be chosen.

Another clear winner on the night was the Scottish National Party, who took 48 of 59 constituency seats in Scotland. This gives their leader Nicola Sturgeon a strong position to argue for another independence referendum, since she says that “Scotland cannot be kept in the UK against its will.”

Students in the Sixth Form were given the opportunity to have their say in a mock general election. After intense debate, where students were able to express their opinions on key political and economic issues, their votes were cast and the majority party was Labour (taking a 57.9 percent share of all votes cast). Of course, this small scale result is very different from the first past the post system that operates across the nation for real general elections, but it does raise interesting questions about whether the voting age should be lowered.

## John Lewis Advert

By Olivia Wydell, Year 10

This year’s John Lewis advert - released on the 14th November – got 7.7 million views in the first week of its release. It may seem like a lot, but it is significantly less than last year’s advert, which was the most viewed Christmas ad of 2018. So what caused this unpopularity?

The advert features a Christmas-loving, CGI dragon, Edgar and the plot revolves around him, his friend Ava, played by ten-year-old Ruby Dailly, and his struggle with his fire breathing abilities. He often loses control of it due to his enthusiasm for Christmas, which affects others who are also trying to celebrate; he melts a snowman, whilst attempting to help build it and burns down a Christmas tree in the town centre after it was decorated. This upsets him so he confines himself to his room until Ava coaxes him out, having come up with a plan. Together, they prove that his fire breathing can be put to good use, and the villagers, who were wary of him before, celebrated when he lit a Christmas pudding.

The music, a vital aspect of any John Lewis advert, was a festive cover of ‘Can’t Fight This Feeling’, sang by Dan Smith, the lead singer of Bastille.

Most agree that John Lewis definitely didn’t disappoint with this year’s advert, from its lovable characters, to the detailed scenery and the uplifting theme that is always present in Christmas adverts. The Independent described it as “all very nice” and “perfectly lovely”.

But not everyone shared the sentiment. Many have said that this advert hasn’t lived up to the high expectations that come with John Lewis’ Christmas ads. A RadioTimes article stated that it felt like “[unwrapping] a Nokia, when what I really wanted was a Blackberry”. John Lewis has even apologised for it, after it left some children “distracted”. A lot of people agreed that the advert was too emotional.

What did you think of it?

## Kindness, care and of course love

By Thomas Armitage, Year 8

Have you ever wondered how your actions can affect others, how every little thing can influence others...? No? Well, that can tell me a lot about you already.

Even if you just smile or be polite for a second that can have an impact on other people around you and can also change behaviour in the slightest way possible, this act of politeness may pass down to whoever you give it to. Now, I know kindness isn’t an object, but, in my opinion, kindness, love and care is one of the strongest forces in the universe and can change a person or a life forever...

# Wath Students Get Creative:

## HachiShaku Sama

### Part 1

A short story by Isobelle Fenton, Year 8

“The bustling car park was filled with excited year elevens, going on a school trip to Japan. They had paid, packed some clothes, and were waiting for the coach to arrive. Geordhon was searching for her friend, Isaac. He was never where she could see him.

“‘Boo!’ someone shouted to her, making her jump. When she turned around, she saw her friend was in hysterics. ‘You! You jumped out of your skin!’ giggled Isaac, eventually calming down.

“Geordhon scolded him, ‘You idiot!’ Shoving him away playfully, she added, ‘Why would you do that?’

“As they boarded the coach, they searched for seats together. At the back, no one was sitting there, for unknown reasons.

“‘Shall we go to the back?’ Geordhon asked, but when she turned around, Isaac was pointing at some seats at the front.

“‘What about these!’ he was insisting.

“‘Isaac,’ Geordhon said, slowly, ‘you know I get sick if I sit at the front,’ she began walking to the back when Isaac gave in, following her.

*Check out the next edition for the second part.*

## Who ever said romance was dead?

A short story by Alexandra Cook, Year 8

The girl was sceptical of their love. So, like any normal human, she tested him.

## Football Success

The school football team recently reached the last 32 in England by beating Manchester Grammar School 2-0. Manchester Grammar School is one of the top public schools of the North and invests heavily in sports scholarships, which makes the victory all the sweeter for the determined and committed students at Wath.

“Would you cry if I left you?”

The boy's face was impassive. “No,” he replied.

Another few questions like “Would you hug me if I was sad?” and finally, “If I left you, would you go back to your ex?”

He looked up at her and said... “Yes.”

Her face broke and she walked away.

A voice called her back. The boy was stood, knee-deep in the snow. “I wouldn’t cry if you left, I’d die. I wouldn’t hug you if you were sad, I would buy you chocolate and kiss you. And if you left, I would get back with my ex because you’d be my ex. I love you.” His green eyes were full of elation as she threw her arms around him.

Finally, she knew who she loved.

## If It Shines

A poem by Lola Billingham, Year 9

Rainbows after the rain and valiantly blooming  
flowers spread colour about;

I fell in love with you that day, as you gazed up at the  
crimson sky.

Not even an instantaneous frame of this dramatic  
film will fade,

Because I’ll carve it all into my heart.

It was you, it was you! The one who made me  
realise;

If we can make even the darkness shine, it will  
become a starry sky.

Sadness will turn to smiles, so don’t hide them any  
longer;

Every one of these twinkling stars will shine upon  
you.

The morning light I greeted, having forgotten to even  
sleep, was stingingly bright,

# Poems, Short Stories and More

But even the tenseness carried by my headache  
subsided when I saw you.

A silent romantic; like sugar melting into black tea,

As your voice swirls throughout my body.

It was you, it was you! The one who gave me this  
smile;

If we can make even tears shine, they'll become  
shooting stars.

Your hand has been hurt, but don't ever let go again;

From a sky filled with wishes, tomorrow will soon  
come.

The light that led me was you,

And I was pulled along into a run.

Before I knew it, we were beginning to cross paths:

Now's the time! If we can just shine here...

It was you, it was you! The one who made me  
realise;

The darkness will come to an end...

It was you, it was you! The one who made me  
realise;

If we can make even the darkness shine, it will  
become a starry sky.

Sadness will turn to smiles, so don't hide them any  
longer;

Every one of these twinkling stars will shine upon  
you.

Is the answer always born of coincidence? Necessity?

The path we once chose is what will end up as our  
fate.

The hopes and concerns you clutched so tightly,

Will surely move us forward to become one with the  
light.

## House Spotlight



The House to be featured this edition is Carthage. Here is a bit of history about the namesake of the House here at Wath.

According to legend, colonists from modern-day Lebanon, led by Queen Elissa, founded Carthage c. 814 BC. The Carthaginian Empire extended over much of the coast of north west Africa as well as encompassing substantial parts of coastal Iberia and the islands of the western Mediterranean Sea.

Carthage settlers were a seafaring people known as the Phoenicians. The ancient city of Carthage, located in modern-day Tunis in Tunisia, was a major centre of trade and influence in the western Mediterranean. Carthaginians were a formidable warring nation. They fought a series of wars against Rome, which were known as the Punic Wars. Hannibal Barca was a general and statesman from ancient Carthage who is widely considered one of the greatest military commanders in history.

The House at Wath has a number of House Values, which all Carthaginians should strive to enact day to day at school:

**Candidness**

**Honesty**

**Kindness**

**Perseverance**

**Strength**

Next edition, we will feature Rome. Until then, don't forget the reasons we have a House system at all: to build teamwork, confidence and community through competition. All these qualities will help students flourish, not just in the classroom (where they can demonstrate the key drivers), but also in the wider world beyond Wath.

# Sport and House Update

## The Head Of House Interviews



Since the rise in House rivalry, there have been competitions every few weeks, including the ones in the boxes at reception. To help the Houses to have a say, *The Torch* journalist Isobelle Fenton (Year 8) spoke to each one about the competitions.

When we spoke to Mrs Cunningham (Head of House for Athens), she told us she was very happy with how her house is doing at the moment, especially with ePraise. Athens are currently in third place for the competitions, but they are catching up with second place – so she hopes they can soon make their way to top spot! She is also very pleased with how more and more Athenians join the house competitions each week. So far, her favourite House competition has been the giant conga, and she would love to see a netball or basketball speedy shooting challenge.

Next to the Head of House for Carthage, Mr Brown. He told us that his House could, and would, do better in future. He thinks they have made a pretty good start, but he wants to see every Carthage student there at least once. His favourite event was the giant rock paper scissors, and he would do a singing competition with Mr. Jackson as the judge.

Miss Majer is the Head of House for Rome. When we caught up with her, she said she wasn't too happy right now with Rome's position in the competition rankings, but she can see they are starting to close the gap between them and Sparta – so she is confident that they will get there. However, she would like to see more people at the events, especially Year 7s and Year 8s! She really enjoyed the aeroplane and dice

competitions, and would love to see a whole school football match in future, with Mr Brown in the net.

Ms Ashton told us that she felt quite disappointed with Sparta's current position in the ranking, because she feels her House should be doing better. She particularly thinks that Year 11 need to get more involved, because they should be positive role models for students in the lower years. However, she has enjoyed the House competitions, especially the aeroplane competition. In future, she would like to see a lip sync battle.

When we spoke to Ms Hodgson (Head of Thebes) she told us that she was very happy with the position of Thebes, who are in first place currently, since they are 'obviously the best!' Her favourite competition was the longest line, because she feels proud that so many people attended to show support to their House and she hopes that even more people will come along on future Fridays. She would really like to see a treasure hunt as a House competition.

Finally, on to Mr Woodward, who is the Head of Troy. He thought his house made a slow start to begin, but shouldn't be dismissed – they have been getting a lot of points in recent competitions. He has been pleased by the way more people have come along each week and hopes this will continue in the future. It is always particularly satisfying for him to watch Athens lose! His favourite event so far has been the speed penalty shootout, which played very much to his strengths – he told us that some people call him the 'Barnsley Messi'.