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Brave New World

In January of this year, Alistair Hopkins arrived at Caistor Grammar School to be our new headmaster. Now, six months after his entry to the school, this paper has an exclusive interview with him, by Adam Pountney 12AHO and Jacob Belcher 12DS

Alistair Hopkins is a headmaster with a mission; an aim to welcome Caistor Grammar School into the 21st Century with his drive and vision.

His previous role was Deputy Head (Academic) at Bablake School in Coventry, and before that, he was an undergraduate at Oxford who read English Language and Literature, a time which he said allowed him the 'opportunity to be with some very interesting and creative people'. His love of literature (his favourite book at the moment being Graham Greene's 'The Heart of the Matter') , and the sport of cycling is certainly apparent, with a vintage cycling poster hanging above his desk, cycling being something that 'is 'a great release' for our head. Now, however, he has had to shift into the saddle of an entire school, a transition from his role at his old school, and he says that 'there's a difference between 'looking at something in theory and actually living it.' Furthermore, Mr Hopkins says something that drove him to Caistor was its tightly knit sense of community, and indeed this is something that he truly loves, saying that 'I think what's important here is that we're all working together'. It's fair to say that in many respects Hopkins has carried on the tradition of furthering this community feel of the school from his predecessor Mr Hale, by being omnipresent at the school gates in the morning, welcoming people into a school that he wishes to be 'an inclusive, caring school, that is looking after both those within the school, but also seeing how they can make the community a better place.',

> "Be yourself, but be better

Mr Hopkins took a career up in this vocation after a career in journalism, making the shift because 'the higher up with journalism, the more removed from people you became'. And, in many respects his front-line experience in teaching that immediately preceded his jump to headship at Caistor has influenced many of the policies he has put into place: his new electronic register scheme and the new canteen payment system, for instance.

He is also dedicated to furthering the culinary delights available in the school, with a Sixth Form cafe being opened on Tuesday and Thursday for the sole use of that group; reviving such foods as hot dogs, burgers, and many more which have had an excellent reception, and a pasta pot scheme being trialled as well. He has also decided to listen to the clamours of the masses and finally replace bag racks with lockers, something that has been requested by generations of CGS students.

It was certainly clear from the short time we spent with Mr Hopkins that CGS, its staff, and its students are now an intrinsic part of him. The reverse is definitely true as well, and we think that our new, soft-spoken, dynamic, and humble headmaster will offer nothing but good to our school. A quote from the man himself is an apt way to close this article—'be yourself, but be better'.

The Trip to Deutschland
Jeder hatte eine wirklich lustige Zeit

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Paint the town red
CGS turns to Labour in a 'complete shock' according to pollster

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A Bug's Life™
Year 7 went to see where the wild things are

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Trips and Excursions

No words will reach us

By JASMINE Burnley 12RDH

"Where've you been?" asked the woman in the post office as I handed her back my Euros from the trip. "France and Belgium" I replied, taking the exchanged pounds. "How was it? Do a lot of sightseeing?" and that's when I thought: *how could I possibly describe the battlefields? How could anyone who hasn't been understand? Could I even understand it myself?* Overwhelming, emotional, eye-opening are just a few of the words that could be used. Whatever ideas we might have had about the trip as we clambered onto the coach in the early hours of the 5th May, bleary-eyed and yawning, had changed completely after just the first day.

After arriving on the other side of the English Channel, the first place we visited was Essex Farm Cemetery which housed a preserved medical station. Here we saw where wounded soldiers would have been taken and also where so many of those had been buried. The most poignant thing for so many people though, was the amount of unidentified graves, commemorated to 'A Soldier of the Great War', sometimes showing a regiment badge or a rank, but often nothing. It was a moving reminder of the amount of soldiers that remained missing. The cemetery was marked by the Cross of Sacrifice in the corner and as we travelled to Ieper we saw many more of these about the landscape, an indication of just how many had lost their lives to the war.

The last stop of day one was the Menin Gate, which we visited shortly after arriving in Ieper. Crowds gathered as the buglers appeared to play the last post. The voices of those around, bearing many different accents and languages, hushed as the bugles began to play. The sound echoed through the walls, engraved with the names of over 50,000 soldiers. This same ceremony had taken place every day since the opening of the memorial in 1927, aside from when Ieper was occupied by German forces in WW2 before resuming when Polish forces liberated the town, a demonstration of gratitude to those that had given their lives for Belgium's freedom.

We awoke the next morning to go to Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest cemetery for the commonwealth forces in the world with nearly 12,000 burials and a memorial to the missing on the walls surrounding it. The site could be seen for miles, set on a rise in the landscape, standing tall as it overlooked the surrounding countryside. Entering the cemetery brought a feeling of shock, although aware of just how many were buried there, hearing the numbers cannot compare to seeing the vast amount of white headstones that faced us, reflecting the early morning sun. Flags and crosses had been placed at the bottom of the graves by those who had come to pay their respects.

We then travelled to Arras, France where the Battle of Arras took place and where 70ft below ground, the New Zealand tunnellers created an 'underground city'. Equipped with a soldier-style helmet and an audio guide, we climbed into the elevator and down into the tunnels. Markings lined the walls, the 'cities' of the underground tunnels named after those in New Zealand. Turning one corner revealed a tunnel they had made that seemed endless. It was amazing that the soldiers had created such a place without the machinery we have today. Various artifacts could be seen throughout the tunnels: jugs, tins and boxes as well as helmets and through the audio guides. We learned all about the history that had taken place exactly where we stood: an astonishing thought.

The third day saw us travel to Thiepval Memorial to the Missing commemorating 72,246 soldiers from Great Britain and South Africa. We read a tearful extract of the novel 'Birdsong'. With the words of that work fresh in our minds, we entered the memorial and saw the names of the thousands of soldiers with our own eyes. Again, having a visual representation of the amount of soldiers that gave their lives in the war, and in this case only in the Battle of the Somme, really brought home the immense loss caused by war.

This loss was also made clear from another cemetery that we visited. However, this was a German cemetery: Maissemy Cemetery. This saw a contrast to the others, with black headstones spreading across the landscape as far as the eye could see. Here, 30,476 German soldiers were buried. For many, this was one of the most moving parts of the trip, it showed that the loss was felt by all countries involved and that even though these were men that had fought for the opposite side, it was still a huge loss of life, of men and boys fighting for their country just like the British and French soldiers had done too.

So to answer the question of "how was it?" Although it can be described, put into words with difficulty, you cannot comprehend it until you have seen it for yourself. The trip was truly eye-opening and although we all have some understanding of the loss and the suffering of the war, we can never fully comprehend it. But the trip to the battlefields, where so much of it took place, can offer as much of an insight as possible and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to visit.

A visit to 'Hell on Earth'

By JOSEPH Shilling 12GJ

Chilling, bleak, horrific. It is hard to put into the words the atmosphere of Auschwitz and Birkenau. From the bare brick walls of the Auschwitz bunk houses to the burnt remnants of the gas chambers where millions of people died simply because of their birth. They had all seen the pictures, but the reality was something that many of the 30 Year 12s and 13s who made the journey to Krakow, were unprepared for.

The first day in Poland, however, was considerably lighter in tone. After an uneventful flight across the continent, walking off the plane, our travellers got their first taste of the Polish climate, and immediately realised that Poland is cold. Very cold. Huddling together for warmth as they clambered into a thankfully heated minibus, they made their way to Krakow. It was here in one of the oldest cities in Krakow that they got to fully experience Poland and their language's peculiar fondness for the letter 'z'. A tour of the historic Wawel Castle introduced them to the stunning architecture of the city that mixes styles from all over Europe as well as the legend of the Wawel Dragon and its slayer Krakus who founded the city and became its king.

The trip to the concentration camps began with an early start in the brisk Polish wind at the dawn of the second day, our travellers thankfully more accustomed to the cold. Yet the chill of walking through the entrance to Auschwitz and reading 'Arbeit Macht Frei' was one felt by even the warmest dressed among them. The students were given a guided tour of the bunk houses, each one showing off a different terrifying aspect of life under the Nazi regime, the most harrowing of which showcased 43,000 pairs of shoes, each one taken from the victims before they were gassed. It's easy to read a number: 200,000, 1,000,000, 10,000,000 and think you can understand the reality of what that number represents, but seeing for yourself the possessions that were left behind by the victims provides a new perspective of what happened there 80 years ago. Birkenau too provided its own fresh take on the horrors of the Second World War, the infamous watchtower looming over the group as they toured the memorial site. The Jewish quarter and its historic synagogues of the city was the focus of the third day. The day was finished off by a walk across the city to the site of the Jewish Ghetto, finishing at Schindler's Factory, before zipping back the hotel on the back of some very enthusiastic golf cart drivers.

The final day of the visit was a trip down the Wieliczka Salt Mine, one of oldest salt mines in the world and a surprisingly beautiful, with underground waterfalls and caverns, even a breathtaking chapel dedicated to the Polish Patron Saint of Miners carved out of the salt. Their final activity would be a meal 100 metres below the ground before returning to the surface to begin their journey home.

Not the 'Wurst' trip ever...

By BEN Wong 12RDH

Every year, the German department is generous enough to host an exchange for the benefit of our students. This year, a group consisting of Year 10 and 11s took part on an adventure to a different area in Germany than previous years, thanks to a exciting new partnership with the Willibald Gymnasium in Eichstätt. The picturesque Bavarian town of Eichstätt, located in the heart of Bavaria, was surrounded by gorgeous, green scenery, but was also home to traditional, German culture.

Last October, the German students had the opportunity to experience the immensely rich culture of Lincolnshire, and at the end of March, they were able to host us in return.
After a late departure by coach to Eichstätt, they were warmly received by the German host family; this gave our CGS students an invaluable chance to learn first-hand the German lifestyle. Apart from attending school at the unbearably early time of 8am, the experience of a German school day was exciting for the group. The partner school was remarkably similar to CGS in its size and friendly atmosphere, although their buildings and facilities were more contemporary in design.

Despite the early start, the students were rushed off their feet with various activities organised by the Willibald Gymnasium that highlighted the qualities of German culture, such as a cooking class, where they were taught to prepare genuine Bavarian cuisine: such as Kartoffelpuffer (potato pancakes).
The trip was full of breathtaking excursions into the surrounding countryside, including hiking trips in the famous Bavarian Wolds, a boat trip along the River Danube and many visits to historical sites, such as "Zum Albrecht Dürer Haus" , the house of famous German Renaissance Painter Albrecht Dűrer. They were also treated to visits to nearby cities Regensburg and Nuremburg, with many of the host families also taking the students out to Munich at the weekend.

The week long excursion was an excellent opportunity for the students to practise their German in a practical environment, with many of the group understanding far more of the language after hearing it being spoken by its native speakers for so long!

All in all, a educational and insightful trip for everyone involved, and hopefully the start of a long-lasting partnership with the Willibald Gymnasium!

Outdoor Events

That was in-tents...

By INDUMITA Prakash 10Y

On Sunday the 21st May 2017, 47 'enthusiastic' students from Year 10 trekked out into the wilderness, otherwise known as the Lincolnshire Wolds, to complete their Bronze Assessed Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expedition. Having finished their practice expedition a month before, these brave adventurers were prepared for what they had to face. 10am in the morning, weighed down with rucksacks, but still ready and alert they marched down to the School`s Pavilion to have their equipment checked by the assessors. Half an hour and a broken rucksack strap later the seven brightly coloured teams headed off on their route with maps and compasses around their necks.

This expedition was the outcome of countless lunchtime sessions from September all the way throughout the year to May. Preparation and training was the key to success. Hours of map reading, first aid training on plastic dolls, learning the map symbols, working out how to use the Trangias and putting up tents would finally be worth it. This was all done within the supervision of the DofE organisers Mr Smy, Mrs Hoare and Mrs Sharp. To add to this each student had to do 3 or 6 months of a skill, volunteering and a physical activity to ensure they had the strength to endure this hard challenge.

Already feeling tired after a few minutes of walking, the groups pushed on to their checkpoints to sit down and enjoy a well earned snack. Contrary to the practice expedition supervisors were not seen as often and were likely to be found lurking in the bushes to take snapshots of the groups unknowingly, but were ready to leap into action on emergencies. Assessors watched carefully from a distance and met at various points to make sure the groups were walking the right way. The weather was likely to be dull and heavy rain was certain, so all the groups put on their waterproofs after lunch. It began to drizzle and then pour down but it was all over in a few minutes. Overjoyed, the groups strode down to the campsite at Walesby to meet the happy supervisors. But to their disappointment a heavy downpour of rain was waiting for them. Battling against the weather the teams quickly put their tents up hoping not to soak their rucksacks which were full to the brim with snacks and clothes for the next day.

After the tents and inners were pitched they could finally look forward to some hot 'delicious' food. There was assortment of gourmet dinners around the tents including pasta, super noodles and an alfresco but also underwhelming cook in the bag dinners. After some cooking mishaps such as a burnt kettle with burnt instructions inside, the groups settled down to eat, quietly enjoying the only hot food for the day. With no phones to be seen, students entertained themselves with cards and the wondrous way of communication – speech. It seemed like they were getting used to nature. After numerous attempts of whispering in the tents without letting anyone else hear, the groups settled down but only before they cleared any evidence that they had even stepped outside of their tents.

Charlotte Marshall, Marsaili Jolly, Anna Carter, Kate Jennings, Indumita Prakash, Isabel Taylor

Early next morning the groups awoke to an orchestra of birds singing and tweeting. Shivering they wandered out of their tents to get changed and put the fire on for their breakfast before the exit deadline – 8am. Activity speeded up and after a nutritious breakfast of mostly porridge, the groups pushed on to get their dripping wet tents down and pack their rucksacks. After toilet stops, frantic searching for the maps and route cards and an attentive examination for any rubbish, the groups were ready to set off!

The second day brought many obstacles, such as the infamous Willingham Woods with its many paths leading to different directions and the confusion of left or right out of the campsite trapped one unlucky group as they wandered into Market Rasen having to change their destination. Meanwhile, the other six groups trudged through the churned up mud at the heart of the woods and fought their way through the undergrowth. The blinding sunlight as they stepped into daylight was the sign they had escaped!

Morale was high as the groups worked their way towards lunch, one hour before their destination; they fought the heat and embraced the cooling winds parading to their end point. Over the two days they had walked a tremendous 30 km, had camped for one night battling the weather and had eaten a record amount of food. At their end point they could see the smiling faces of parents and supervisors waiting to greet them and take them home for a well deserved rest.

Discovering 'New' lands

By AVA Farnsworth 7Y & SAPPHY Dunn 7Y

Each summer term at Caistor Grammar School, many Year 7s embark on a trip to the Lake District. They stay at Newlands adventure Centre for four busy and adventurous days where they can take part in many outdoor, indoor and wet activities.

At 7:30 am, 78 excited pupils started arriving at the busses with their masses of bags, ready to go on a four hour journey. Many sweet wrappers later, they reach their destination. After eating and dropping off their bags, they began their first activity; team building games. In their 11 groups of 7-8 people, they worked as a team to complete many challenges such as The Floor is Lava and The Matrix.

Each day there would be a morning, afternoon and evening activity which certainly wore everyone out. The next day stored many activities for all the groups. One of which was ghyll scrambling. This was one of the favourite activities over all as it involved a lot of sliding down rocks and jumping into pools of water. Although very cold and scared, the year sevens encouraged everyone to do all the jumps and worked as a team to complete all the tasks. One of the Year 7 students that went to Newlands said, "My favourite activity was ghyll scrambling. Even though I got a bit hurt, it was really fun."

Another activity was paddling. This gave a chance for everyone to learn how to kayak and canoe. Each group travelled to a nearby lake surrounded by stunning scenery and little islands. They played lots of competitive games and had fun jumping in at the end.

In the woods there were many high rope activities, such as a Tarzan swing and zip-wire. Many of these activities involved teamwork and trust as they B-laid each other up the scarily high ladders and trees. Another student that participated in the high rope activities said, "I enjoyed the high ropes because there were lots of different activities and they were all really fun."

Mountain walking was a challenge for many of the students at Newlands. Without each other urging their group to carry on walking, they would have probably never reached the top. There were two mountains to climb; Catbells and Barrow. Although it was tricky and tiring, it was all worth it for the rewarding ice-cream at the end.

Of course, this trip would not be possible without the trip organiser, Mrs. Hoare. She organised the room order, the groups, and the activities. Mrs Hoare says that, "I think that Newlands is a fantastic opportunity for the Year 7s, because it gives them the chance to do all the things they couldn't normally do and pushes them out of their comfort zone". Mrs Hoare also thinks that, "I hope that the year 7s come home with new friends, new ideas about the things they can do, and new things about themselves".

Most pupils thought that the food was extremely tasty. Each day, the pupils had a full English breakfast, a sandwich, and a three course dinner. One of the pupils said, "The food was extremely enjoyable because we had three course meals, which were all really nice and well cooked".

Without the staff that came to take care of everyone, this trip wouldn't have been possible so the whole year owes them a huge thank you for being there to support us throughout our time at Newlands.

Suited and royally booted!

Alistair Brook, Ellie Hill, Ellie Brook, Lindsey Russell, Molly Craig, Isabella Chase, Luke Green, Michael Trueman, Mr Mick Hoare

On 24th May 2017, a group of Gold DofE alumni travelled to Buckingham Palace to be presented with their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award at a Royal Garden Party. It was a fantastic event which rewarded a serious amount of hard work.

On their expedition, the group took with them the Lincolnshire flag. Whilst on their travels they carried this flag to the top of Helvellyn. This very same flag, they then brought to London for this prestigious ceremony.

Congratulations to everybody who was present for this amazing event.

House Plays

A giant, a pauper, and a big bad wolf

By TOBY Barnett 9Z

On Tuesday 28th February, one of CGS' most famous yearly events was held. Everyone gathered in the Town Hall for a 'professional' afternoon of theatre. The Ayscough, Hansard and Rawlinson house play casts fought for the title of "Junior House Play Winners". In the end, Rawlinson reigned victorious, with their brilliant performance of their modern take on *Little Red Riding Hood*, while Hansard's interpretation of *Aladdin* and Ayscough's *BFG* were left competing for second place.

"Hashtag Red Riding Hood. Hashtag at Grandma's house. Hashtag bored" were just some of the humorous words of Tilly Bellamy, 9Z, performing brilliantly as "Red" in Rawlinson's comedy show, Joel Cottingham, 9X, the cross-dressing and pearl obsessed Big Bad Wolf and Alston Rodrigues, 8Z, performing marvellously as Red's mother. 'Her' abnormally high pitched voice and some more of the other hilarious characters carried the show to victory. Along with the vibrant costumes and humour that was littered ingeniously throughout the piece, the cheesy dances and "funky" music stole the show and led Rawlinson to victory with a huge 99 points! Congratulations to the cast and crew which aided this outstanding score.

With Hansard's record of coming second starting to be uncanny, it was almost unsurprising when Aladdin and his lamp came so close to victory, yet "not quite close enough". Apparently, Toby Barnett's, 9Z, last wish of the genie, "I wish that Hansard win the house plays!", did not come true. Although the cast worked the hours and contributed lunchtimes and afterschool sessions to achieve what was a brilliant performance, they fell just short of the 99 points Rawlinson managed to achieve. All in all however, Hansard's effort certainly was one to remember. This time round the focus was more on music over just acting, with an ensemble to set the scene of the story, and a duet sung by Jasmine, played by Eva Phillips, 7Y and Aladdin. The music was not the only thing that excelled, however. The acrobatic genie, played by Amicia Harris, 7X, was another event that wowed the audience. Freddie Crowder, 9Z, also played a key role as Abu, Aladdin's loyal companion, who with Aladdin set out on Hansard's epic.

In 3rd place came Ayscough. Last, perhaps, but certainly not least with their fantastic performance of the *BFG*. Jonathon Omonbude, 7Z, burst into life in just his first year at CGS; performing as a rather small *Big Friendly Giant*. Ayscough's loveable story showed that even the scariest of things on the outside can be the best of friends on the inside, and that Roald Dahl stories are still close to our hearts. Charlotte Morton, 9Y, performed spectacularly as Sophie, and the obstacle of her being larger than the BFG was tackled brilliantly.

The year of 2017 certainly did not fail to deliver when it came to house plays. Expectations and hopes were high, and the audience, along with the judges, were certainly provided with a good afternoon of entertainment. Older actors took to the junior stage for the final time, at the same time as new stars were just bursting onto the scene. A huge thanks goes out to all the other cast members, staff and helpers even from outside of school; this year's events will not be forgotten.

The main characters from our Junior Plays

Hansard hits a hundred— get ogre it!

By GEORGIA Metcalfe 12DS

History was made this school year with Hansard Seniors performing the first ever full mark performance.

On another highly anticipated Wednesday afternoon, the audience gathered in the town hall to be stunned by performances from Ayscough, Hansard, and Rawlinson seniors. Fairly matched for second place were Ayscough and Rawlinson, who performed 'The Apprentice' and '21 Church Street' respectively. Jyothi Cross, Year 10, shot straight to the centre stage with her skilled performance as Lord Sugar; she was assisted and supported by Amber Doughty, Matthew Thompson, Luke Green, and Annie King. There were some fantastic ad-libbed scenes which received well deserved laughter, and showed that improvisation is just as important as a well-rehearsed performance... maybe. The play focused on the typical house stereotypes: Ayscough as the 'arty' house, Rawlinson as the 'sporty' house, and Hansard as 'the house that never wins anything' (clearly they missed the mark on that one). The play ended as you would expect, with Ayscough coming on top, predicting their hopeful fate of being "hired" as the first place champions of the senior house plays.

Harry Strange and Charlie Maxon led a humorous performance mimicking the comedy film '21 Jump Street'; their brotherly charm coupled with crime-fighting abilities wowed the crowd and earned them much respect. Ella Hodson and Luke Wakeman starred alongside the boys as their commander in chief and the suspect of a dastardly crime. While the play was short, it still earned an enthusiastic applause and matched in second place with Ayscough. Hansard came out on top in this series of plays; they scored a record-breaking 100/100 points and showed that fairytales aren't just for the juniors. Georgia Metcalfe starred as Shrek, and despite a horrific attempt at a Scottish accent, led the cast to a stunning victory. Powly Wijayratna put on an incredible performance as Donkey, the loveable sidekick, and blew away the judges and audience with her fantastic American accent that would put Eddie Murphy himself to shame. Ella Suckling became Fiona, a self-absorbed princess who transformed into an ogre every night. She acted the part very well despite the character being far from her true self; and her fast makeup changes that transformed her from human to ogre were mightily impressive. As the token villain of the performance, Henry Montgomery from Year 10 acted as Lord Farquaad, a bigoted prince desperate for love. His downfall came about by the twist of this play: The Communist Revolution. The fairytale creatures stormed the stage, waving the communist flag, demanding Farquaad stop his oppressive regime.

Overall, the Senior House Plays were once again a success. They filled an afternoon with laughter, and allowed everyone to show off their talents. A special thank you goes out to the tech team for their patience in rehearsals and their seamless work. The performing arts captains should be largely praised for all of their hard work that allowed these plays to be possible. Congratulations to everyone who took part, we can't wait for next year!

"A memorable afternoon"
- Lucy Howes 12GJ

Sixth Form Events

Whole new ball game...

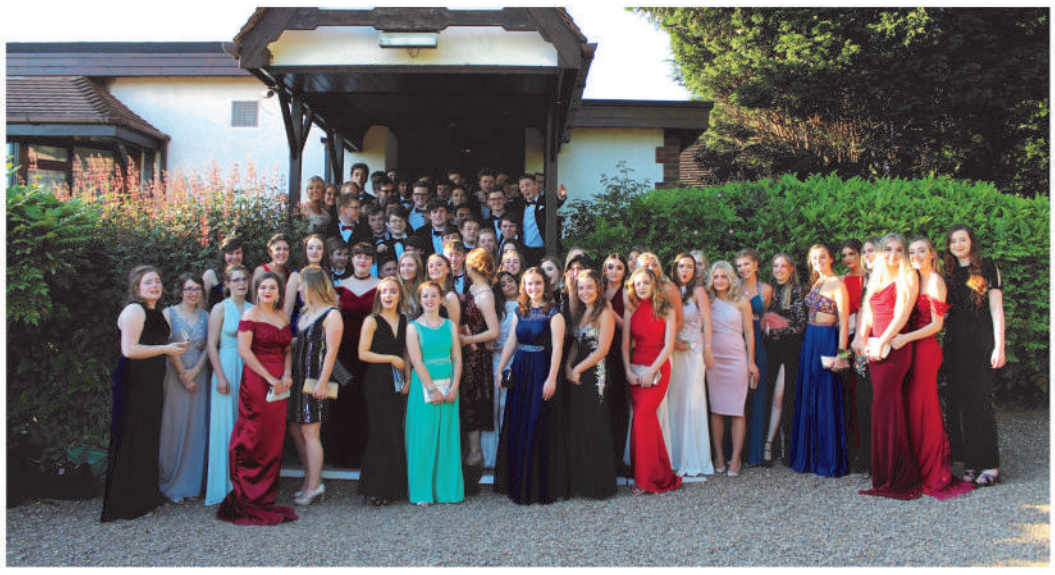
By REBECCA Wells 12GJ and EMMA Krofchak 12DS

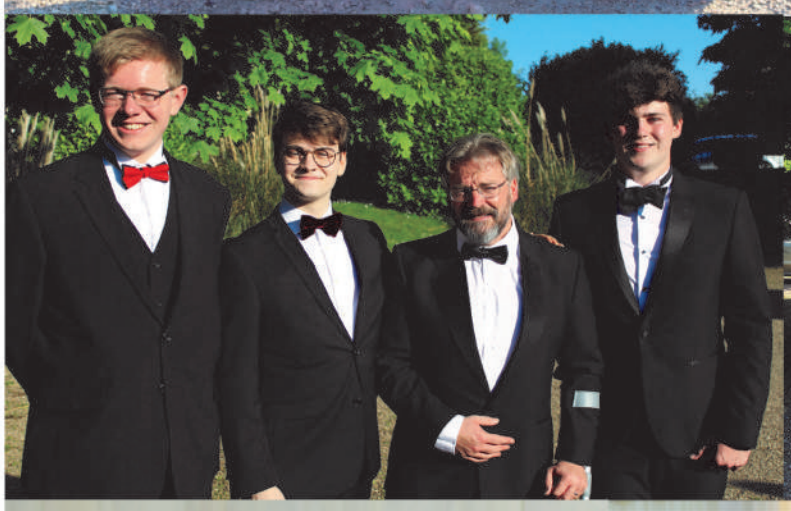
Friday 26th May saw the annual Sixth Form Ball take place at the White Heather, Caenby Corner. Both sixth formers and teachers arrived at the venue in high spirits, as they looked forward to the night ahead. This occasion marked the first of hopefully many for head teacher Mr Hopkins, who described his first ball experience as an 'excellent evening', and praised the ball committee for their 'high standards of organisation'. The event would not be possible without the hard work of Mr Hay and his team of sixth formers, in particular Bridie Salmon, Year 13, who put a lot of work into creating a fantastic night for everyone.

The evening included a DJ, a magnificent firework display, a magician, a photo booth, and a range of food and beverages which proved to be popular amongst everyone. Mr McTernan praised the 'great variety of the evening' and he himself, along with Mr Hopkins and Year 13 student James Smith, provided a unique entertainment for students and staff, delivering a comedic tribute act to the departing Year 13s, the theme being "Real' Oscar's Ceremony'. The light-hearted and well-performed act highlighted each individual's attributes, and credited them for their outstanding talents.

This entertaining yet emotive performance was followed by an outburst onto the dance floor, as rather eccentric dancing and singing commenced (which Mr Hay described as 'average, especially from certain members of staff'). The firework display came shortly after and it took every one by storm as an eclectic multitude of colours lit up the fading summertime sky.

The night overall saw everyone come together in order to celebrate the Year 13s and their time at Caistor Grammar School; and, in the words of Mr McTernan, it was a 'superb evening and a fitting send off for Year 13.'





A farewell to some behind-the-scenes staff

Broddening his horizons

By Thushi Thulasiraj 8Y

Joyful Mr Broddle, our Site Manager, is unfortunately saying goodbye to Caistor Grammar. He has worked for Caistor Grammar School for ten years in which he has faced many unexpected things. Throughout his time here, he has worked tirelessly to keep the site running and everything running smoothly. Mr Broddle will be dearly missed by the whole school.

He is a very important figure in this school because he keeps the school in the perfect condition it is always in. This is a much harder role than some people think it is and to do it without a flaw is outstanding! If you've ever needed something fixing, organising or securing around the school, chances are Mr Broddle has done it for you.

We managed to arrange an interview with Mr Broddle on what his feelings are about leaving this school behind to retire. This is what he had to say: "I will miss this school very much because I have enjoyed my time here. After working here for ten years I have grown close to my colleagues and the people around me. I will miss them very much."

The teaching staff and students will miss Mr Broddle, but so will the people he has worked with to keep the school running as smoothly as it does.

One of those people is Mr Cumberland, who had this to say about working with Mr Broddle,: "I have learnt a lot from Mr Broddle after working with him for three years and it will be a very sad loss after he goes."

We also asked some students about what they think about Mr Broddle and this is what a Year 8 student had to say about him: "He is very important to the school because he keeps the school running in perfect condition and that's why all of us will miss him very much. Whenever you see him around the school, he always has a smile which brightens the school atmosphere."

Another Year 8 student, Amna Abbas, said, "Even if you don't know him you can always tell that he is here because the school site is always immaculate."

Mr Broddle's replacement, Mr Porter, has been seen around the school in recent weeks, getting to grips with all of the important jobs he will have to take over, and learning as much as he can from Mr Broddle's great experience of the school. He will have some very big boots to fill!

Mr Broddle is planning some well deserved holiday time after he retires, and we wish him a happy and relaxing time away. After that, he plans on "lifting the load from his shoulders"! It's certainly thoroughly deserved. Thank you, Mr Broddle, for giving so much of your time to the school, and we hope you have a fantastic retirement.

"I've learned a hell of a lot of things from him" - Mr Cumberland

It doesn't make Spence!

By Louis Metcalfe 8Z

After 3 years of wonderful R.E teaching, Mrs Spencer is leaving CGS this summer. She is moving on to new pastures in Yorkshire. She has been a loved teacher and has always been enthusiastic in lessons; she has made R.E a great subject for all.

Known for her R.E teaching she has also been a bright character around the school site and for lots of people Mrs Spencer leaving will be very sad. R.E will never be the same at CGS. She has helped Mr Hay and Mr Hopkins make the R.E department the best it can be and to offer students amazing R.E education that will help them later on in life.

In a interview with Mrs Spencer, she said that she, 'has found CGS a great place to work and she has been very happy at this school'. She said she, 'will miss all the staff as they have been all amazing to work with'. She is moving up to Yorkshire to teach R.E at another school, she said that she, 'will never forget the school and she has really enjoyed her time at this school'. We can happily say that we have also enjoyed her putting up with us students in her lessons.

The school will miss a teacher such as Mrs Spencer, she was a hard working, enthusiastic teacher who the R.E department were lucky to have. She has brought fun to R.E and made it an exciting subject that pupils can easily learn. Her teaching style was a great one that we wish all teaches had, she made sure that there was never a dull moment in the classroom and she tried to get everyone involved in the subject to make them learn much more effectively.

Other colleagues at CGS stated that 'she was always enthusiastic and was a pleasure to work with and that she will be missed by everyone at CGS', they said that, 'the school was lucky to have a teacher like her and they all wish her the best in later life'.

I think that all of us at CGS will deeply miss Mrs Spencer and we can all agree that she was an amazing teacher that we were lucky to have.

A great expedition beyond Caistor

By Amna Abbas 8Y

It is extremely upsetting to say that Mrs Hoare, our Educational Visits Coordinator and Duke of Edinburgh's Award Manager, is moving on in life and will therefore be leaving Caistor Grammar School in July. She has been with us for a decade and has enjoyed her years of work very much.

When we asked Mrs Hoare in an interview about her leaving the school, she said, "The school has been a huge part of my life for 10 years so I will definitely miss it a lot". Some of the challenges she faced in life were being the head of D of E. "Part of my job has been the Duke of Edinburgh award and that's very challenging because it involves putting lots of lunchtimes and evenings into it, organising the trips and physically it's very demanding".

Benjamin Dawson in Year 10 said, "Mrs Hoare is very helpful and she basically does everything, she helps with organising the trips and mapping the routes for D of E." Thushi Thulasiraj in Year 8 said, "She's a lovely lady and you can go to her for help". For me, her passion and positivity are what have made Mrs Hoare such a lovely person to be around.

Mrs Hoare isn't sure what she wants to do further in life but she is looking forward to it even when she will miss her colleagues and work very much. Mrs Hoare stated "That she has enjoyed all the things that go on every day and every day has been different".

The school will miss such a great person, due to her loyal work. She has worked really hard and we appreciate all the efforts she has done for the school. She was really important for the staff and students and we wish her best of luck for her future.

"A whole new challenge is waiting for me" - Mrs Hoare

Caistor is debating

It's the Caistor Focus wot won it!

By Alex Tees 12GJ

While the mock election of Caistor Grammar may not have caused the shockwaves that its national counterpart caused, it still left many shocked and a few dropped jaws. The country has spoken and the result at Caistor perhaps foretold a story of what was to come. The political debate has been widened and many younger students now politicised with a batch of new young budding politicians to shape the future.

With the election looming Year 9s and Year 10s were all invited to join the party of their choice. Labour, Conservatives and the Greens all attracted many devout disciples whilst in the Lib Dem camp, there was a somewhat... let's say, disappointing turnout. The next step was to elect party leaders with Matthew Fieldsend being chosen to lead the Conservatives. Culum Bond was Labour's choice to try and snatch victory. James Hare was chosen to lead the Greens and Toby Hibbert was somewhat a dark horse for the Lib Dems. With a wealth of party funds (well... £5 worth of printer cards) the next stage had begun for the candidates.

The campaign trail for the candidates had now commenced. Labour set out to paint the school red in the form of sticking posters up around the school (including on Mr Hopkins' door) with the face of their candidate featuring on all reminiscent of some kind of totalitarian regime. The other parties perhaps a bit more subtle with their propaganda produced many witty posters criticising the other parties.

The next step for the candidates was to participate in a debate, at which the Conservative candidate actually turned up! The debate was chaired by Adam Pountney and Holly Mottram. The debate was a quite heated affair with all passionately advocating their respective parties and their policies. Each candidate was given time to introduce themselves with confident and assured speeches coming from all. Next came questions from the audience, with questions proposed ranging from a number of topics from climate change and terrorism to the NHS. The audience enjoyed the parliamentary performances from the candidates, especially the Green Party supporters who took great delight in the words of candidate James Hare. The competitive but friendly nature of the panel often at times resembled a session of the House of Commons, with the representatives of each party taking glee at systematically dismantling their opponent's arguments and ideas.

The result that followed on the fateful 8th of June saw a shock result, without the landslide Conservative victory many expected, as shown by returning officer Mr Robinson labelling the result "a complete shock", with a tie between Labour and the Conservatives at 107 votes each, settled by a ballot between the two, which announced Caistor Grammar School would be turning red for the first occasion of the millennia, and the first since 1997.

Perhaps Mr Fieldsend can find a nearby wheat field to run through after losing such a tight contest, unlike the Labour candidate who will be as happy as Mr Corbyn. Closely following in third place was the Green Party, with a remarkable 87 votes, a proportion much higher than the national average. However, much like the results which developed throughout the night, the Liberal Democrats received only 16 votes, a somewhat disappointing result for Hibbert.

Mr Robinson, our resident political expert known as the 'Derbyshire Dimbleby' by no one, said that Year 10 and the sixth form voted strongly Labour which could be an indication that Labour's policies on Brexit and scrapping tuition fees resonated well with younger voters, another way that we were able to predict the outcome of the election.

Despite the result becoming perhaps less favourable to some than others, the four candidates gained valuable public speaking experience and should certainly be commended at the very least for expressing their views in front of their peers, no easy feat. And of course, thanks must go to the teams behind the candidates, whose work in producing and spreading propaga- I mean election material, cannot go un-noticed.

Matthew Fieldsend (Con) and Culum Bond (Lab)

Debate Club

By Alex Tees 12GJ

Every Friday lunchtime in Casterby, Titans and demigods clash in a fiery battle of wits, wills and avoiding tough questions. Of course this definition could only be attributed to Debate Club of CGS. Despite coming from humble origins, in recent years it has become a somewhat vital part of some Year 12s and 13s weekly school life.

The heavy weights of the club meet weekly to discuss burning issues of the present time and conduct arguments in obtuse proportions with many a witty remark and heated exchanges being the norm. This year the audiences in the debate room of C1 have been filling every week under the guise of former leader, James Smith. Many turned out to watch his speeches which were always entertaining and could be brutal at times to the opposition if he so wished. Year 12s and 13s alike turned out to witness debates on a diverse range of topics ranging from Margaret Thatcher to should pineapple be allowed on pizza.

Now with the departure of the former triumvirate, I feel obliged to pay tribute to all the Year 13s who previously ran it and made it such a success and also thank anyone who contributed in any form no matter how big or small for making debate club what it is now. With the old out in comes the new. The torch has been passed on to a new generation in the words of JFK and my year group I know would be greatly pleased if we can make it nearly as successful as it was this year.

By the time this has been published, there will have already been a total of four debates under the new team. Under our new leadership of President King (he is democratically elected I swear), we can all look forward to a host of plentiful debates in the future and be assured that the quality of debate will not deteriorate with a host of well established debaters already present. There has already been a debate on Hitler vs. Stalin and one in which we all reacted to the election and gave the opinion of our retrospective parties on the results that had come in the previous night.

Debate club is an age old institution out dating many teachers at Caistor and awaits to be unearthed by any new comer to our sixth form. As well as providing an entertaining Friday lunch time for sixth formers, it also offers people the opportunity to increase their capacity for debate and the best part ... anyone can debate, no matter how much experience prior.

Balloon Debate

By Saffat Hossain 9Z

Monday 20th March saw the final outcome of the survival of three people, something which sorely depended in the quality of their argument in the History Balloon Debate.

Year 9 were informed of a challenge awaiting them. This challenge consisted of a balloon rapidly losing altitude, so the only way the passengers can survive is to throw the person of least historical significance out of the balloon and to their certain demise. Instructions consisted of choosing a historically significant individual before the 21st century and putting forward a justification of staying on the balloon by explaining why they are an important historical figure and have made very important historical contributions.

The debate was not easy at the slightest. First up, there was the writeup. Every participant had to write their vindication of survival and submit it to their respective history teacher. The teacher's job was to select the 10 strongest arguments and inform those courageous speakers to brave the form heats and express their voice of reasoning to their classmates. All things then depended on the classmates and classmates only. One after another, every person spoke true and clear the passionate words deciding their fate. This was their chance to live and they just could not afford to make a mistake . After time was up, each student then revealed their own top three and the top three overall were the ones who appeared the most frequently within the open opinions of the non -speakers. As it turned out, each student seemed to have found this among the most difficult decisions in their lives. Nonetheless, three people were chosen.

The day had turned 20th March, the clock ticked 10:59 and the tension reached its peak within the walls of the Old Hall. Nine finalists were ready, rearing up for the grand finale, the finale that will only let three through to triumph. The clock said 11:00 and the History Balloon Debate Finals commenced. The fight for life was between Chizu Obu as Mother Teresa, Freddie Fearn as Alessandro Volta, Toby Barnett and Joel Cottingham both standing for Winston Churchill, Florence Stead as Florence Nightingale (quite original), Rory Longcake standing for Thomas Edison, Ella MacPherson as Soujourner Truth, Danielle Bate as Louis Pasteur and Vignesh Kamath standing for Napoleon. With all of the great historical figures ranging from British Prime ministers to French dictators to great scientists, it was always going to be a close contest. (There are two Churchills, throw one out!)

At the time, it seemed impossible to choose a winner but after endless waiting for the results, the students were astounded when Mr Hopkins revealed that indeed, he managed to pick three winners. "In third place, we have Freddie Fearn as Alessandro Volta," the Headmaster said in a firm tone. "Second place, there is Vignesh Kamath standing for Napoleon," continued the Headmaster. "And first place is...Danielle Bate as Louis Pasteur!" After that, the silence was abruptly broken by ninety people cheering and applauding in enthusiasm for the three worthy winners of the History Balloon Debate. They had survived from a drop of certain death, an achievement they were well congratulated for. The annual competition which is now entrenched in the tradition of Caistor Grammar has produced yet another historian who has been able to survive the drop and are added to the extremely long and qualified list of notable historians who have made their considerable mark in history.

Editorial: What's happening in the outside world?

Sunny side up!

By HANNAH Marland 12AHO

Amidst the fear and general upset caused during the first half of 2017 so far, it's important to us here at Caistor Focus to bring you the good, as well as the breaking news. With that in mind, here's some good news from the year...

With the top stories of the year so far understandably being acts of terror such as the Manchester and London incidents, we must give our praises and thanks to the brave individuals who risked their lives to help others, and offer shelter, food, and safety to those in need .

The weather in the UK skyrocketed to heights of 27°C in recent weeks, allowing for warm weather excitement to commence! Though of course we have returned to a state of downpour in typical British style, the thrill of weather that allows for less clothing then an Eskimo is not likely to die down anytime soon.

In other news relating to this; thirty male students protested the 'sexist' warm weather uniform regulations, by arriving to their Exeter secondary schools donning skirts; a step towards both equality in clothing, and relieving the stress placed on students under a strict uniform even during the extremely hot temperatures.

If you're a fan of fine dining (and travelling), you may also enjoy a newly opened pop up café in Tokyo. The café has gone viral for only hiring waiters suffering from dementia. It helps in raising awareness to dementia sufferers, as well ending the stigma, and creating a fun and surprising atmosphere. Many customers have praised the 'surprise factor' of the experience, as what you order may be entirely different to what you actually receive, making it a completely unique dining experience.

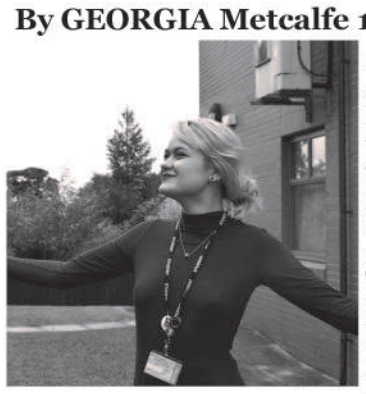
The ocean cleanup project has also announced that they are ready to begin clearing the Pacific Ocean of floating plastic that has spent years endangering the lives of sea creatures. The project was developed by Boyan Slat, who claims that the test stages of the procedure will begin off the American coast in late 2017, not only good news for environmentalists, but also the sea creatures who are bound to enjoy their newly cleaned home.

Of course there are some honourable mentions: the amazing success of Ariana Grande's One Love concert, the friendship and compassion shown in the London Marathon earlier this year, and of course; the world's deep passion for memes bringing both the internet and the world together as one.

It's clear to see there's some hope for 2017 after all!

Corbyn MAY have lost...

By GEORGIA Metcalfe 12DS



By now, everyone will have heard of the results of the snap general election called by Theresa May; if you haven't, then please let me know how you hide from the awful reality of our current government situation. Just to clarify, the Conservatives 'won', although without a majority; Labour were the true winners though. While they didn't get the most votes or seats, Jeremy Corbyn (bless his soul) came through as the underdog and showed May up massively. His campaign gained him trust and respect throughout the country, particularly with the younger generations... Which may explain my bias? Except not at all, because his policies actually make sense. Imagine running to be the PM, promising anything that people want to hear, while not having a costed manifesto. How can we trust someone who doesn't actually care enough to inform people of what she's doing?

I realise I just sound like some ranting, angry, left-wing teenager who is clueless about the inner workings of the country and government, but this is an opinion column, so does it really matter? Obviously it does, and I'd hate to think my opinions aren't based off of fact; for example, it's fact that Theresa May completely messed up her campaign. She turned up to few debates and made few public appearances, this is because she simply can't cope with the height of her position. If she can't debate against Corbyn the 'underdog', then how can she be expected to deal in talks within the EU summit and get whatever it is she thinks that our country needs? We can't really, she just can't be trusted, bad PM, etc etc etc... But at least she knows how to have fun: Running through wheat fields is the naughtiest thing she's ever done – shock horror! It should be made a criminal offence, then maybe she'd be locked up. She'd never be punished for selling arms to Saudi Arabia (a war crime that she claims will 'keep people on the streets of Britain safe'), and although that is a much worse offence, she might actually get charged for those terrible crimes of running through a field *rolls eyes*.

Rant over.

In summary, the country is a bit messed up at the minute. The 'coalition of chaos' leaves us fearful for the future; at least Corbyn can enjoy pulling pints at Glastonbury and is basking in his brief fame with the hippie kids.

Britishness: down to a tea

By CHLOE Graves, 12RDH, & POWLY W, 12DS

If you're not currently queuing, talking about the weather or your upcoming Sunday Roast, then complaining about your cold cup of tea, then are you really British? Despite the ever-changing society we live in, over the generations our defining British values have remained constant. But what does being British really mean?

With major political events shaping our nation like Brexit and the 'Coalition of Chaos', we are still more concerned about the underdog winning the World Cup or Love Island. You can't make a trip around the London Underground without someone apologising for simply looking at you the wrong way; our tendency to be over polite can often be viewed by outsiders as being artificial yet endearing, which is probably why our British values have stood firm and unchanged.

One only has to mention the word "Summer" to Brits before the clothes are ripped off and the beer is cracked open (often before 8am if in a stag do at an airport.) Whilst our European neighbours have a glass of wine with their dinner, Britain prefers to be out on the streets 'necking' tequila. At the rate at which we are going, this key feature of Britain is here to stay, much like our love for the exquisite cuisine of fish and chips. Furthermore, it doesn't matter which exotic territory in the world we are, the British are so self assured in what they are fond of that they will consistently order burger and chips – who would want to eat snails or pho anyway?

The quintessential Briton can be identified by their undying love for the Queen - even the AQA Exam Board, who felt it appropriate to allocate a whole AS General Studies paper to our monarchy. Elizabeth is unavoidable with her face plastered on every coin, note, flag, curtains and bread loaf, not forgetting that Christmas just would not be the same without the Queen's annual inspiring speech.

There are only so many times that an American can approach a British person shouting "You're a wizard, Harry" or "exterminate" before you genuinely believe you go to Hogwarts and own a Tardis. Forget Wenlock and Mandeville, Harry Potter and Doctor Who are the real British mascots.

In the technological era, the introduction of dating sites such as Tinder encourages forwardness and chat up lines, yet it is difficult to comprehend that the British can somehow maintain their awkward Bridget Jones persona around strangers; it appears that these values will forever be engraved in our British social beings. We all would like to imagine that a cinematic, romantic love story will bloom when you see someone in your tube carriage, but we all know that it will never happen because we're British and we will NEVER TALK TO PRETTY STRANGERS.

Although we may be criticised for our dry humour and a stiff upper lip, I think anyone would have to agree that just like the British accent; our tendency to completely conform to the stereotypes of Britain is truly unique and adorable and should be respected. Without intending to condone stereotypes, the majority of assumptions in regards to Britain are accurate, and at the heart of all that it means to be part of the culture.

Making America Great?

By SEBASTIAN Bowen 12DS

The pragmatic 45th president of the United States has certainly made an impact in Washington since his inauguration on the 20th of January earlier this year, although all we seem to hear in the media is either about his heavy handed approach to politics, or his controversial tweets. However today I would like to explore the lesser known side of Donald Trump's presidency, the beneficial changes that he has made for America. So far Trump has signed thirty-eight executive orders at the writing of this piece which sends a clear message to the Senate and the House that Trump intends to get things done in his presidency. Here are some of the highlights of the changes made by the business man come president so far.

The economy has boomed since Trump has taken the reins with over half a million jobs being created in America since his arrival in the White House. Consumer confidence is at the highest it has been in 17 years and stock market has rallied behind Trump's vast knowledge of business with a surge only second to John F. Kennedy's time in office. Trump has also taken steps to reduce corruption in the government by imposing a five year ban on lobbying the government by former White House officials. This was done to try and return the power to the people and reduce the influence of well funded businesses delivering large pay cheques to easily persuaded politicians.

The good news doesn't stop there for America, Trump has shown that he is concerned with all aspects of the country and not just the economics with the passing of his thirty-forth executive order which promotes free speech and religious liberty. He has also taken steps to tackle the large veteran problem in America showing his focus on putting America and her citizens first.

However the unconventional president's choices for the country haven't all been well received with the rest of the world and many within the US. For example Trump repealed the Obama placed mandate that forced states to fund Planned Parenthood and instead reinstated the Mexico City Policy blocking American tax dollars from going out of the country to fund similar foreign plans. Finally, one of Trump's most recent moves in the game of international chess was to pull out of the Paris climate accord. This lead to outcry from many other leaders involved in the deal, with Angela Merkel calling the withdrawal 'extremely regrettable' in a recent interview.

No matter what your views on the tenacious president are, you can't deny he is whipping America into shape, for better or worse.

Year 7 & Senior Prefect Team

Senior Prefect team spring into action

By ANNA Carter 10Y

Spring is of course a time for new beginnings, new life and at CGS (drum roll please) the new Senior Prefect Team. After long hours spent perfecting speeches, numerous hustings and the all important job of totting up the votes, come March 16th the formidable team of 2017 was announced.

The super six, who play a vital part in representing the school, took up the post from the previous team at the start of the Summer term. Their role is to work closely with the six form council and the lower years' form representatives to ensure all students voices are heard, as well as advising the head on issues and decisions concerning the school.

When asked why he wanted to be part of the team, Secretary to the council Adam Pountney, thought "being part of the team was a responsibility that would be suited to me as in my role of secretary I take a lot of minutes, organise meetings and plan agendas which I enjoy." Upon being pushed to then describe the senior prefect team in three words or less, "ambition, inclusivity and motivation" sprung to mind, echoing their main three aims for their time in office. When brought together these three make the word *AIM,* added Head Girl Lauren Shale. "We want all the students to aim higher than what they are currently achieving, be ambitious and set targets for next year, using these three motions. As a team we feel it's important to get everyone involved and feel included within school activities and clubs to ensure everyone feels happy and welcome within the school environment. Towards the end of the year we'd then like to move onto motivation, particularly with exams approaching to bring it all back together."

Focused on carrying out the aim, Tom Rollinson said the team intend "to spilt the aim into three terms, with a different focus in each section. For the second half of the summer term the emphasis is on ambition, carried out by visiting forms and asking the students what their targets are for next term in and outside of school. The second term we will then move on to promoting inclusivity by getting as many people involved in clubs and events as possible. We've got a Year 7 Fresher's fair planned to get people to bond as it's at this point people feel anxious about joining a new school and start forming friendships. Then for the final term it's motivation, with the focus being on mental health awareness week which will be finish our time as Senior Prefect Team."

Upon being asked to describe something interesting about himself, Deputy Head Boy Archie Swain said "I went to Bolivia on a world challenge which was a life changing experience. It involved helping communities and going on many walks, the biggest being up a 5200m ascent. I had to be motivated and determined, which again reflects the aims for this year's Senior Prefect Team. Harriet Lloyd, secretary to the council stressed how much she enjoys her role within the team and alongside her, Pippa Bradley agreed the three main words to describe the senior prefect team would be "determined, proud and enthusiastic."

Overall the ambitions and aims for this year's team not only sound impressive but are guaranteed to be carried out efficiently and to the highest of standards. For more information on their plan check out the new Senior Prefect Team's Instagram page.

Above Top Right, the outgoing and incoming Senior Prefect Team. Directly above is the new team from left to right; Adam Pountney, Pippa Bradley, Tom Rollinson, Head Mr Hopkins, Lauren Shale, Archie Swain and Harriet Lloyd.

Medieval Mayhem

By LILLY Bell 7X & HOLLY Bradbury 7X

On Friday 9th June, Year 7 students took a step back in time to the medieval period, excitedly exploring the ruins of Conisbrough castle. This astounding trip was organised by Mrs Dowthwaite (our Head of History) to truly bring the past to life and help students with their current topic.

The crumbling castle is situated in the hilly landscape of Conisbrough (South Yorkshire) and the time-consuming bus journey was approximately an hour long. On the stunning journey, eager Year 7 students observed and experienced beautiful views of the amazing counties of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire.

This exhilarating trip couldn't be possible without the huge help of the extremely committed staff: Mrs Dowthwaite, Mr McTernan, Mr Croft, Miss Dales, Mr Hopkins, many parent helpers and not to forget the friendly staff at the old castle itself. Not only did Mrs Dowthwaite organise the trip, but also, she happily assisted in providing interesting information, which was absolutely essential to the upcoming assessment. Mr McTernan and Mr Croft were also on hand to supply the Year 7 pupils with fantastic facts and more remarkable information on the many significant features of the unique castle.

One of the major reasons for running the trip was to consider the different aspects of the castle and the way it was built. During the day, the students had the opportunity to collect intriguing information about the distinctive sections of the structure. This included the terrific tour of the walls, lead by Mrs Dowthwaite, and exploring the vast inner bailey, directed by Mr McTernan while Mr Croft guided us around the tremendous stone keep, which was constructed in 1180. As well as all of this, the students could also experience the activity centre, run by the castle staff, who offered useful and interesting information which had not already been given. It was in here the students handled replicas of artefacts from the medieval period, giving them just a taste of what life was like for the residents of the castle.

Another significant reason for the trip was to gather useful information for an assessment in which students in Year 7 were expected to create a guidebook holding the collected information about the key features of the castle and explaining them for a 21st century visitor. Students were encouraged to strive and achieve a high standard which could show their progress and improvement in fun history lessons (and outside the lessons too) throughout the school year.

Many people enjoyed the trip. Mrs Dowthwaite said, "I think it was beneficial to the students because they got to see the impressive Norman castle in its beautiful surroundings. They could gather information on the different parts of the castle from the staff lead tours for their assessment. Also, they had the opportunity to explore a range of artefacts in the visitor centre to help them find out about medieval people". Not only did the teachers enjoy the trip, many students were keen to express their view on how much they enjoyed the trip. Maeve Carey, 7X, Josh Knowles, 7X and Pearl McCann, 7Y all thought it was an interesting and beneficial trip.

In conclusion, this trip was very interesting and beneficial, and undoubtedly helped students with their Conisbrough castle guidebook for their assessments. Both students and teachers had fun and enjoyed an amazing day out.

Whisby goes wild

By ANNA Carter 10Y

From June 13th to the 15th three sets of intrepid Year 7 explorers ventured out to Whisby Nature Park, armed with only buckets and nets to aid them in their quest to unearth the beetles, bugs and other beasts that lay hidden beneath the surface of the lake.

Upon arrival the teams were briefed on their mission by the leader at the centre and given the lowdown on what species they should keep their eyes peeled for; water fleas and Ram's Horn Snails were high on the list. Once the whereabouts of the critters were established, the groups assembled on the platform by the lake for pond dipping, awaiting the first catch of the day. With buckets and nets to hand, the sample trays filled up thick and fast. Out came the magnifying glasses when it was time to examine the contents, proving to be a tricky task as all specimens squirmed and wriggled when put into scrutiny, in particular the water scorpions and boatmen. When the time came to wade deep into the murky waters in search of more critters, things took an unfortunate turn for Mrs Marris after her wellies quickly filled with pond water, no doubt leading to an uncomfortable, not to mention soggy, journey home.

Afternoon at the centre was again action-packed, with bug hunting proving popular with all involved; the more notable creatures netted included mating damsel flies and frogs. One of the toads at Whisby even made an appearance from beneath a log. When the time came to board the buses back the students of CGS, exhausted yet still enthusiastic, had certainly had a memorable day at Whisby.

Year 7 students Emma Cowan, Elspeth Jolly, Abby Burkill and Toni Neale enjoy pond dipping

Maths, language and literature

Mount Dickinson

By VIGNESH Kamath & KAMYA Gandhi 9Z

Matt Dickinson, a man who has travelled the whole world, making films and writing novels, humbled Caistor Grammar with a visit in March this year.

Being a successful author and film maker, his presence truly motivated the aspiring writers and film makers in our school, especially with his insightful talks and willingness to answer questions he was asked. In one such session, he commented on how reading books is what piqued his interest in climbing mountains, and he aimed to share some of his books, knowledge and wisdom with the many interested students at our school.

Ever since he was a young boy aged just twelve years old, Matt Dickinson has always had a great interest in mountains, and especially in climbing them.

One of his expeditions to Mount Everest led him to dire peril, when he barely survived the infamous '96 Mount Everest Disaster. His whole journey to climb Everest took approximately 10 weeks. In an interview, he revealed to us the apprehension and nerve he felt at the top, and said that the first thought to run through his mind was: "help! Someone get me out of here!"

It is very dangerous to be at the top, and he told us of the many dangers he faced when climbing down. Of course, there is always a lot of excitement and adrenaline, but he also told us how he faces immense fear – fear that there was still enough time for things to go horribly wrong whilst descending.

We asked him about how he pushes through his worst times on a mountain, times in which he felt hope dwindling and when he started losing all motivation to continue. He responded by telling us that you need "resilience and a strong sense of determination" to power through and keep climbing.

When we asked him why he climbs dangerous mountains despite knowing the risks, he answered by telling us that although it is a challenge, it is fun and he really enjoys the teamwork and meeting new people. The challenge may not be for everyone's tastes but it is something he truly enjoys.

He recommends it to everyone and hopefully, his determination and achievements have inspired you to try something new or face a challenge today.

Being a filmmaker and an author, he used his experiences in the many hostile places he has visited to make great films and books. His favourite films to make were those on Everest and Antarctica, when he was filming unclimbed mountains.

His novels have also been based mostly on his many experiences whilst climbing Everest, making them amongst the most accurate available.

His favourite book to write was 'Mortal Chaos', which was a massive project for him, taking almost 10 years and a lot of determination to write it.

His advice to aspiring authors would be to "do things... [and] have experiences" and face challenges that can inspire their writing. He explained the importance of reading, noting that reading as widely as possible to learn about other writers and the techniques they use is very helpful.

Overall, his visit to Caistor Grammar School was greatly appreciated by us all, with his tips to aspiring writers being very motivating indeed.

Matt Dickinson, left, displays his books next to Mrs Hoare

Das Language Festival

By JESSICA Meacock 9Z & FREDDIE Fearn 9Y

On Monday 26th and Tuesday 27th of June, three primary schools (Caistor Primary, Grasby All Saints and Wadingham Primary) brought their Year 5 and 6 students to Caistor Grammar School to participate in the ever-anticipated Language Festival.

The Year 10 Language Leaders have been thoroughly practising all year so they could lead the classroom activities with the primary students. The students arrived at 9:30AM and were put straight into exciting German language exercises. After an engaging and joyful morning, spent learning what was, for most, a completely brand new language, it was time for the students went to have a well deserved break.

After break, they were moved more towards their comfort zone and familiar territory, learning French - which most had already begun to do at primary. However, they were still challenged with brand new words and phrases, learning new vocabulary and building strengths with food and places around town. These two topics are very important for students who study French at CGS, and even if the young visitors don't join us they have gained some very useful skills.

We were able to get an interview with one of the diligent language leaders. Whilst instructing young children is not for everyone, she said that she wanted to do it because she, "loves languages and working with young children". Another leader said that she did it because it would help her should she become a teacher in later life. This was an amazing opportunity for both language leaders and students, and this time honoured tradition is of great benefit.

One of the primary school student said that they "really enjoyed learning a new language" and another commented that they were having a "great time". Overall the Language Festival seems to have been a huge success with primary school students developing their language skills and language leaders experiencing teaching for the first time. Everyone involved has thoroughly enjoyed this year's Language Festival.

Language Leaders leading a German lesson

Challenge accepted!

By VIGNESH Kamath & JESSICA Meacock 9Z

Maths is one of the many subjects that Caistor Grammar School takes much pride in, so naturally, the Team Maths Challenge is a big event in the School Calendar.

After the larger UKMT, featuring the well-known (yet not necessarily well-loved) booklets of questions, there comes a time when four great minds unite to tackle villainous maths questions that perplex even the best of minds.

This year, the team looked strong. Neha Elangovan 8Y, Benjamin Huhes 8X, Vignesh Kamath 9Z and Saffat Hussain 9Z all worked tirelessly to perfect those formulae; to master those methods and to crunch those numbers.

In the Regional Final, they came second - painfully close to first place. Fortunately, just days before the National Final, the winning team dropped out, giving our brilliant brains the chance they longed for.

Finally, they were able to prove themselves in the great city of London, and to try prove their worth in one of the most notorious challenges these young minds can face.

Accompanied by Mr Robinson, our team gave it all they had, and came 52nd out of the 88 teams there. An immense effort, with an amazing result. Well done!

Next year's team will have a hard time of challenging this year's challengers as their talent, as our fine school consistently encourages students to try beat previous records and strive to achieve their best.

Thankfully, our team remained undivided during the tense competition

All change at CGS

Master chef, master plan

By FREDDIE Fearn 9Y and TOBY Barnett 9Z

Earlier this June, the canteen left behind the old system of coins and notes and went cashless. This was one of Mr Hopkins' ideas to revolutionise the school.

The system means that now everything is paid for by the unique thumbprint of each person. Not only can dinner be paid for using a simple thumbprint but school trips can also be paid electronically, instead of checks and spare change that can be easily lost or stolen.

When we interviewed Mrs Hitchcock, the catering manager, she spoke about how it has been a success so far and has attracted more students to school dinners, as well as reducing prices. "A larger variety of products is available to the students with this new system".

She also mentioned that other schools have already introduced this system, and it is the "best way to provide a service for the students". On top of this, Mrs Hitchcock told us that there is room for development in the future. There is a possibility for pre ordered pack lunches with this system – a sneak peek into the future of the canteen!

In years to come, CGS will most likely take in more students – this school year over 100 Year 7's joined us, whereas three years ago the number was barely over 90! With the introduction of this new system, more tills can easily be added to the canteen and therefore queuing times will be reduced significantly. "Easier, safer, quicker!" says Anna Carter from Year 10, summing up the system. We all love the cookies that have started being sold ever since Mrs Hitchcock's arrival; let's just put that out there!

Along with the introduction of the new catering system, Mrs Hitchcock is getting to know students, teaching them about her skills in the canteen during food-tech lessons. Students in Year 8 have been cooking and catering, and going home with delicious food. Unfortunately, students in the previous year missed out on this great opportunity, whereas Mrs Hitchcock is introducing many to the art of cooking. Thanks to her, the Year 8 students have been making "shortbread, muffins, and pizza" to their heart's content. Soon enough, the CGS canteen will be a world-wide, Michelin star restaurant. Mrs Hitchcock, we salute you!

Year 8 baking cookies in food technology.

Food tech with Mrs Hitchcock. New biometric system and snacks introduced in canteen.

Love for lockers?

By JESSICA Meacock 9Z

At the start of every school year, many students are united with one common thought: 'I hope I get a bag rack next to my friend'. So how will this change when the bag racks change?

Having had the bag racks since the 90's, after a student fell over a pile of bags and suffered a serious accident, they are as firmly ingrained in our school life as cross country, or house plays, or any other fine tradition. Now, 27 years on, many students and staff are instead leaning towards combination lockers - not dissimilar to Caistor Yarborough Academy, or Healing School.

Problems with the current bag racks include an aged appearance, open exposure to weather, and a lack of security. Staff and students are divided over the extremity of these issues, and if they are even a problem, yet most people find that lockers would easily (albeit expensively) solve these issues, and that lockers are the only available solution.

Mr Hopkins remarked that new lockers are "something that the student council wanted. . . [and] would help with making the school tidier and so students don't have to worry about bags left in the rain."

Mrs Buck, also commented about how the lockers will bring many benefits, such as the fact that they will make the school look more modern and tidy.

Whilst it is true that lockers greatly reduce the effects of the Great British Weather, as well as any potential for lost possessions, is it all good news?

In the past, lockers weren't bought due to a diminishing school budget, and some thought they could cost a lot of money. However, the current lockers will only cost students £6 a year, and should have easily been paid for within the first few years of their installation. This seems a small price to pay for the security and practical advantages that lockers will bring to the school.

Overall, the majority of students are very excited to get new lockers. If all goes well, the school will be a neater and tidier place to be, and the amount of items taken from lockers will shrink to zero. Despite divided views, the lockers will not cost too much and they will undoubtedly be safer and more secure.

Old bagracks, exposed to harsh weather.

New lockers, smart and secure.

Library levels up

By JESSICA Meacock & VIGNESH Kamath 9Z

The Library is, undoubtedly, one of the many facilities in our school that we can be very proud of. The thousands of books it holds enrich the mind to no end.

However, many students know that going to the library to renew library books is a pain - finding time to do it, remembering to do it, even just putting the book down is an issue for some. Whilst not every student feels a burning need for an easier way to renew books, it is an important change for those who love both books and our library.

After exhaustive efforts by staff, book renewal (amongst other great services) has been made available from every computer in the school. Like all great technology, there are updates predicted for the future such as access from home and a new app is on the horizon.

Many students are very excited for these new developments. Our Librarian, Mrs Jago, thinks that "having access in just one place made no sense", and that students deserve a better way of renewing books. Whilst this exciting development may be overlooked by more cynical students, the Literacy Leaders love it. Rory Longcake of Year 9 said "I think it definitely makes it easier for people. The app sounds like an amazing idea!" Hannah Scott, also of Year 9 said "It looks cool and updated . . . everybody loves apps!"

So what actually is this new update? From now on, students can use their library code and password to check history of loans, search the libraries contents, renew books, and more. This will help save time, as well as easing congestion in the library. It will also help take stress off of students who frequently forget such things – we can now do it as soon as we reach a school computer.

As a school, we have recently undergone many technological advancements and are pleased to say the library has not been left behind. The new library website and improved access is undoubtedly a vast improvement, which many people are currently appreciating.

Mrs Jago proud to showi us a sneak peak of new library app.

backofthenet
THE SPORTS SECTION OF CAISTOR FOCUS | SUMMER 2017

Raising the bar: athletic success.

By Sam Redgate-Large 12DS

It's been another fantastic and successful athletics season here at CGS, following standard Caistor Grammar School procedure by cruising to victory once again. With our long lasting legacy of success in athletics, there is always a huge amount of expectation weighing on the athletes of CGS and with the district championship taking place, all eyes were on the sporting stars of Caistor Grammar School to raise the bar once again. With sporting stars such as Molly Alcock (10X), Emily Barratt (10X), Lily Welton (9X), Joel Cottingham (9x) and Henry Cullen (8Y),all achieving highly in their individual district events which took place at Cambridge, on Sunday 18th June, where they all successfully qualified for the County Championships in their events. The limelight was stolen from these 5 athletes' fantastic performances by the always impressive, Pavel Grab (9X), and Chizu Obu (9X) who not only stormed to victory in their events but then went on to qualify for the National Championships too, an achievement which had only been achieved once in CGS history.

However this isn't the only time the CGS athletes have tasted success in recent weeks, in traditional CGS fashion, our athletes have not failed to impress with the Inter Boys team competing and more importantly winning the ESAA A-Final which took place on Monday 19th June , sweeping aside all competition, to win the event outright. The team fought hard with the likes of Chizu Obu (again?) running away with the his 300m victory which he ran in an amazing 38.5 seconds, and unsurprisingly winning his event.

As a team, they worked hard, supported one another, and ran, jumped, and threw themselves to victory. What makes the achievements of the boys all that more impressive is the events came back to back, meaning fatigue was a high possibility. The determination and drive of the athletes is something that all of them should receive high credit for as they still managed to compete at the top level despite a competition the previous day. Their persistence, enthusiasm and sheer willpower is what has helped them reach these fantastic heights which all of us at CGS believe they can continue to reach.

Netball or nothing!

By Will Hart 12GJ

After their initial storm through the school's netball league, the Year 10 Caistor Grammar girls sought to show off their skills at the county league netball tournament. With captain of the team, Emily Barratt (10X), leading them closer to the final, winning match after match, surely nothing could hold them back from claiming the title of County Netball Champions. The girls were feeling determined until they were faced with the challenge of beating all-time school rivals Kevigs. In previous netballing years, our victorious march has always been snuffed out by the likes of Kevigs, often finding the well organised and determined team too much to conquer, but this year there was no way we were backing down and after scoring goal after goal, the Year 10 girls found their stride and stomped out Kevigs' hopes of beating us another year in a row, with a very impressive result, leading to the girls becoming our county champions.

The captain specifically praised Iona Christie (10X), who's stunning defensive display helped keep the team well organised and unbreakable. Additionally Barratt mentioned Molly Alcock (10X), for her fantastic playmaking skills from the centre position, setting up shot after shot and assisting many of the hoops being scored by the offensive half of the team. On the whole, the team played exceptionally, and showed outstanding sportsmanship to their rivals, but the girls now turned to face their next competition, the regional netball tournament. The girls fought their way to the final, beating numerous, skilled teams, where they were matched against Bramcote, a team who frequently outclassed their opponents with multiple landslide victories. Of course our Year 10s weren't afraid and were ready to face the challenge. The girls battled hard, creating some fantastic opportunities with multiple shots finding the net, but unfortunately we'd met our match. Bramcote were a strong all round team whose squad depth helped them keep fighting until the final minutes. Much to the dismay of our girls, Bramcote kept battling down to the dying seconds and managed to sustain the advantage they had gained in the previous quarters. However, the girls fought the entire hour, but just couldn't find the goals they needed. Despite this demoralising loss, the girls are more determined than ever to win the Regional finals in the upcoming years, and we have the upmost faith that they're going to get it done.

Haswell's Homeland Honour!

By Sam Redgate-Large 12Ds

In March 2016, Angus Haswell (11Z) received some news which would change his sporting career, forever. Having loved playing rugby for as long as he could remember, Haswell often dreamed of the day in which he could play for national team, and in March 2017, that dream was made a reality. Angus received a call that not only would he be able to join the squad for the Scottish U16s, but that he would represent his national side in two games. The games took place during the Easter holidays whilst Haswell should have been preparing for his GCSE exams, but with the huge opportunity presented to him, we cannot help but forgive him for putting his pen and paper to the side for a couple of days to pull his national team's jersey on. Angus, who plays in the number 8 role for his country (which consists of being the centre of the back row and supporting the scrum) made two appearances against The Dragons and The Scarletts. During an interview with Haswell he told me about his experiences with his national side. "It was a privilege and the greatest honour to wear the jersey of my national country, it was a dream come true. Having dreamt about the moment since I was young boy, it was all very surreal and I treasured the experience. I'd like to thank my teammates and all the staff at Market Rasen and Louth Rugby Club for their ongoing support in helping me achieve my dream."

So what the next step for Haswell? Angus hopes to keep progressing up the national ladder, "Obviously the end goal is playing for the full national side, but that's some way down the line. The next step for me is trying to progress into the Under 18s side." Angus' hard work and determination have helped him achieve his goals and without the support of staff at both CGS and Market Rasen and Louth Rugby Club, his dream would have been much harder to achieve. On behalf of the whole CGS community we'd like to wish Angus the best of luck in his new adventure on the national stage and his rugby career.