CAISTOR FOCUS

WINTER 2017 | THE NEWSPAPER OF AWARD WINNING CAISTOR GRAMMAR SCHOOL | caistorgrammar.com

Sunny Times for Caistor

CGS is the top state school in the East Midlands

The Sunday Times' Parent Power Rankings gives our school the position of the top state school in the East Midlands. We interview our headmaster to find out his thoughts about this accolade, by Adam Pountney 13AHO & Edward Berry, 13DS

Caistor Grammar School is the top state school in the East Midlands. That may sound like a little bit of a bold and heavily biased statement, but according to the Sunday Times' new Parent Power rankings of 2017, an authority on the matter, it is – without the shadow of a doubt - a fact.

By casting a glance at the Times' findings, Caistor Grammar is the 76th top school in the country, a shift up 36 places from last year's rankings, with A level A*-B pass rates of 72.9%, and GCSE pass results A*/A (now the new 9/8/7 grades) of 66.4%. These numbers and statistics are all well and good, but to truly get a reading of how significant this award is, we decided to speak to our headmaster, Mr Hopkins.

As expected, he was elated with the

> "I am tremendously proud.

accolade, which he found out about on the 17th November. It was an award that made him 'tremendously proud to be the head of this school', and he was especially happy with the fact that this result showed that the school can compete with especially well-funded, fee-paying independent schools in the area, saying that 'what we offer here exceeds a lot of independent schools, and that this shows that state schools are at the cutting edge of innovation in teaching'. He also felt that this was illustrative of not simply statistical results, but the 'contribution all students and staff make to the school'.

Alastair McCall, editor of the Parent Power supplement said about the school that 'Caistor encourages students to develop a much broader focus than simply to achieve examination success. They simply achieve across the board.', and Mr Hopkins concurred with his view, saying that the award 'shows us our extracurricular programme in school is key and leads to a happy student – we are much more than just an academic school.' Mr McCall also said that 'The students of today stand comparison to the best in the near-400 year history of the school.'

The sheer merit of this award, shows that Caistor Grammar is truly leading the way of education in not merely Lincolnshire, but in the entire region of the East Midlands. Especially when one takes into account the struggles that both students and teaching staff have had to deal with regarding the new GCSE and A-Level syllabuses, we believe it can definitely be said that our placement in this table is definitely something well deserved for all within the school. It is something to be incredibly fulfilled about, and something that truly honours the effort students and staff put into the school to make it the best it can be; to echo Mr Hopkins, we should be tremendously proud.

Come Together
CGS raises money for Children in Need

ARTICLE PAGE FIVE

Assez plutôt bien
'Beauty and the Beast' wows audiences

PICTURES PAGES SIX & SEVEN

Cool Running
Everybody's favourite sporting event of the year comes around

ARTICLE PAGE TWELVE

Fresh faces

Philosoph-Lee!

By HANNAH Marland 12AHO

After the departure of Mrs Spencer (and her trusty collection of crosswords) at the end of the summer term, there was a hole in the heart of our RE department. Thankfully, we found the perfect person to fill this void – Miss Lee, accompanied by her trusty companion, Fable, a black Labrador, who you might have seen around Caistor during Fable's daily lunchtime walks!

This is Miss Lee's first official teaching job, however so far she is loving her time at CGS, noting her surprise that she 'survived the first term'. Compared to her teacher training jobs, Miss Lee has noticed how big CGS is, something we don't hear often as such a close knit school ! At first, the fresh-faced RE teacher was intimidated by the much bigger class sizes, however is very thankful that she has settled in well, thanks to the very welcoming nature of our staff and students.

In terms of what she loves most about Caistor Grammar Sschool, Miss Lee has said she appreciates how straightforward the policies are (including a humorous anecdote about the 'warning' systems in one of her teacher training schools, that made no sense to the staff or students) meaning her new teaching life is as stress-free as it possibly could be, and she enjoys the much bigger class sizes as it offers her a chance to get to know a whole range of students, and form good teacher-student relationships with her pupils, which is also her favourite part of teaching!

Her love for teaching Philosophy and Ethics comes from its flexible nature, as she says 'there is never necessarily one clear answer to any ethical question', and she loves being able to hear the opinions of her students on many matters to do with Philosophy and Ethics. Miss Lee also says that 'We live in a multi-faith society now, so it's a very important subject', as it helps promote understanding to faiths we may not necessarily be as knowledgeable about. Not only this, but she notes that she enjoys the debates that can be held in class, as it allows for opinions to be shared in a manner that isnt simply essay writing and exams.

If Miss Lee was not working at Caistor, she would like to continue her higher education at university, and continue to study Religious Education at a Masters, and even PhD level, in order to greatly expand her knowledge.

So far, both students and staff alike have loved the addition of Miss Lee to the RE department, and will no doubt enjoy continuing to work with her in the future!

Familiar faces

By LUKE Roberts 13GJ

MR THOMPSON

Mr Thompson has taken over as the Performing Arts Technician at Caistor Grammar School. Before returning, Matthew was passionate about the arts, and more specifically, music, and even more specifically, the cello. Soon after starting sixth form in 2015, he quickly realised that "coming back was something [he] wanted to do", and this was affirmed when he realised that he wanted the opportunity after Year 13 to "help out the younger students with their performing arts, as well as the chance to apply to some further colleges."

After his year of assorted music, plays, and being overworked, Mr Thompson plans on "going to music college to study cello and music, in hope of becoming a cellist", saying one of the best things about being here again is "viewing the school from the other side of the spectrum", as well as enjoying the "authority and the different relationship" with teachers he has. To compare his job to his time spent as a student here, Mr Thompson said it was very different and enjoys not "having to do homework every week", although admits he is now under a "different type of pressure."

MISS CRAIG

As an avid Year 13 scientist nearing the end of her sixth form education, Miss Craig decided she wanted a gap year, and when considering how to spend her time in that year, chose to return to the place she knew and loved: CGS. She chose to return to us as a technician to "improve [her] lab skills and gain some experience before applying to university", and seeing the change from school uniform to lab coat has seemed rather strange.

Molly says she enjoys the most at CGS "having a great laugh with the science department" – understandable with all the fun experiments done in science, although hopefully not too much laughing is going on while handling anything overly dangerous! As she's starting to get comfortable with her new place in the school, Molly says technician life is "very different to being a student, you're working with the teachers rather just being taught by them", as well as how she's enjoying the difference of not having to go to lessons.

Looking forward to the future, Miss Craig would like to establish herself in the realm of scientific research and after this year move on to university!

We would like to wish both Mr Thompson and Miss Craig the best of luck for the rest of this academic year, and also give our best wishes to the future they embark on after their completion of their CGS journey.

A sporting start!

By ALICE Watmough 8Y & AVA Fansworth 8Y

As with every year at CGS, the PE department have adopted new staff. This year brings Mr Moloney, Miss Riddel, and Mr Ward. We have interviewed them in order to bring you the breaking news about these new faces.

MR MOLONEY

Having been interested in PE and sport from a young age, becoming a PE technician was obviously the correct choice for Mr Moloney to make. Part of his job consists of helping the other PE teachers in lessons, helping out with the extra-curricular activities and helping to run the after school events and tournaments, such as football and netball. It is apparent that all students appreciate the work he is doing for the school and the PE department, and many have agreed that he is a fun new addition to the school. Mr Moloney has said he likes 'the enthusiasm from the staff and pupils', and enjoys coming to school every day, which is more than we could say if we had to do PE every day! He is hoping to continue his stay here at CGS to do his teacher training and with a bit of luck, he also wishes to continue to teach.

The wide range of sporting opportunities CGS offers intrigues Mr Moloney, and makes him want to stay for a lot longer. He likes the 'amazing facilities' including the 2 football pitches, 4 netball courts and the Astroturf. Personally, we think that without him, cross-country lessons would be doomed! He is always enthusiastic and encouraging and will look to help whenever he can. Mr Moloney (along with the other technicians) agrees that the gym could be a little larger, but overall he thinks that the PE department simply couldn't be improved further!

MISS RIDDEL

Miss Riddel already believes that she made the right choice coming to CGS, and it has made her hope to continue teaching secondary school pupils after her time here. She "loves teaching her students", and learning about each of their individual qualities. The main reason Miss Riddel came to work as a PE technician is simply that she "loves sports'" and that's really all that matters in her eyes.

Miss Riddel takes her place in the PE department by taking over Miss Ellerby's lessons teaching netball and basketball, all students agreeing with one student's point that "everybody loves her lessons", and saying she "really enjoys working with students" and really enjoys teaching. After her time at CGS, she would like to find a job teaching PE in another secondary school. Her reason for this is wanting to share her skills with students, and help them to develop theirs.

Miss Riddel enjoys helping out at the after school fixtures that CGS holds, and believes that the range of extra-curricular activities are great, from football to netball games, specifically mentioning that she is very impressed with Caistor Grammar School's sports facilities such as our netball courts and astro-turf, allowing us to hold and play fixture games at school. She also states that she likes the fact that the school has a fitness suite, because not many other schools have such a facility and it allows students to do more than just play sports, and provides access to an indoor facility. It is clear students love Miss Riddel and think she is an amazing addition to the staff, and the both pupils and the PE department believe they wouldn't be the same without her.

MR WARD

Being a PE technician, Mr Ward loves teaching different age groups different types of sports. He finds the students friendly and helpful, and can see each unique character. He finds the staff inviting and they make him feel at home here at CGS.

After working here he hopes to get a full time job as a PE teacher at any school he can. Sport has been a major part of his life, and Mr Ward would like to transfer his enthusiasm on to the next generation. This is why his main goal is to "raise student aspirations and get them involved in physical activity". He wants to make sure his pupils are excited about joining in with PE. He is enthusiastic about the benefits of his pupils getting stuck in when he is teaching. Mr Ward finds the playing fields 'really good!' However, he too thinks the gym could be slightly bigger, as when there are 31 students in there for a PE lesson it can be difficult for each of them to show their individual talents. As a whole, he thinks the school is great and full of many opportunities.

Lovely linguists

By LUKE Roberts 13GJ

At the start of every year as a school we always welcome visitors from countries we study, and this year was no different. In the 2017 to 2018 school year we invite Miss Layla Lavenu from France, and Miss Sina Joppe from Germany.

Miss Lavenu is from Perpignan, a city in the South of France near the border of Spain, and Miss Joppe is from Göttingen, a university city in central Germany.

The two have travelled to England for students and teachers at Caistor Grammar School, and already they have helped students of all ages in the school with their studies by assisting teaching in lessons through taking classes and playing games and doing quizzes with students, as well as taking the time to teach our students more about their culture, helping them not only learn the language but come to understand more of the countries they are studying, as well as helping students outside of lessons and taking the time to teach themselves about our school, country, culture, and fish and chips. We can surely expect this trend to continue as students enjoy the experience of learning first hand about the countries they're studying. Our two visitors also support school activities greatly, attending House Music and travelling with students and teachers to Normandy on a recent trip.

Although not available for comments themselves, students that have been working with Miss Lavenu and Miss Joppe have stated they both seem to be settling into and enjoying our school life and culture fantastically, and that they seem to be enjoying themselves greatly, and we can only hope this lasts for the whole duration of their stay!

Trips

Great Expectations for trip

By JASMINE Burnley 13RDH & ELLIE Brook 10X

This October, the Year 8s took off with *Great Expectations* to Derby to see Neil Bartlett's dark and foreboding adaptation of Dickens' classic novel.

The long but exciting bus journey proved to be a stark contrast to the simple yet chilling stage production. The stage was never fully lit, bringing about a sinister ambience, only emphasised by the mechanical din surrounding the theatre. The set up of the stage added to this atmosphere further, transporting the audience to 19th century Kent with its ominous marshlands.

One of the most powerful performances came from the infamous, embittered bride, Miss Havisham. According to audience member Lilly Bell, she was "portrayed very effectively as a creepy character". Having read most of the book in class, seeing it completed on stage as an ensemble piece, thus bringing the story to life, helped understanding and increased enthusiasm for it amongst the students.

Then, on the eve of the 23rd of November, 44 students in Year 10 (and one stowaway who wasn't on the list) boarded a bus to Lincoln to watch a man be plagued by his demons, fall in love with a woman, and kill Sir Danvers Carew. Not as stalkers, but as an audience to Lincoln Performing Arts Centre's performance of Jekyll and Hyde. Whilst it was undeniably based on the book by Robert Louis Stevenson, creative liberties were definitely taken. With a company of 3 actors and 1 actress, the tale of Henry Jekyll was told, with the inclusion of a romantic interest for both Lanyon and Jekyll in the form of Eleanor O'Donnell, an Irish singer.

Since students are studying the book for GCSE, it was an undeniably useful and insightful adaptation to watch. Mr Davey, organiser and audience member commented that "the students benefitted fantastically from this enjoyable production," despite feeling the inclusion of a love interest was "slightly unnecessary" and "crowbarred in". General consensus was that the play was "good, but not true to the book."

Overall, all of the students who went on theatre trips, saw unique and entirely appreciated adaptations. Both of the plays were well received by pupils and teachers alike, with many agreeing it helped their understanding and appreciation of their studies.

Pete Vardy's havin' a party

By HANNAH Marland 13AHO

On the 7th November 2017, thirteen Year 13 students arrived at the school gates at 6:30am, ready to embark on their most important adventure in life so far – The Peter Vardy Conference.

Peter Vardy is a British academic and philosopher. He has published works which demonstrate his interest in the relationship between science and religion, as well as what it means to live a fulfilled human life. Also, Vardy likes to explore the concept of God, something which he discussed in the conference with the Year 13 students.

Travelling in the minibus (Expertly controlled by Mr Hay), we eventually arrived in a slightly desolate part of Manchester. Navigating through the city appeared to be our biggest challenge, which included getting lost and losing Mrs Marris. Just in time, we made it through the doors of the Methodist Church where the conference was to be held. After a short wait, Peter Vardy and his red jumper arrived, ready to inspire.

The Year 13s enjoyed what could only be described as a 'riveting' selection of Power Points, covering topics such as God, Gender and Sexuality, and exam techniques, covered by Charlotte Vardy, the *youthful* wife of our speaker. The students found these power points to be essential in their revision, as they covered a lot of material that had been already done in class. After a short lunch break, we were greeted by Dr David Webster, a lecturer in Philosophy at The University of Gloucestershire. Webster presented us with a short lecture on secularism, which everybody found extremely useful because it links to what we plan to cover in lessons in the future. This was followed by an intense debate between Webster and Vardy, about whether religion belongs in the 22nd century. To help produce an outcome, audience participation was encouraged, our own Emma Thomsen contributing her views and representing the Philosophy class of Year 13.

Overall, it was a brilliantly informative day. With Adam Pountney noting that it was a 'rare insight into the mind of a philosopher only previously known to me through a textbook', and Jasmine Burnley adding 'It was a thrilling and emotional journey.' Alex Tees described the trip as a 'maelstrom of different emotions with an enthralling climax," and later claimed that he was "lucky to be alive" after Mrs Marris drove along the motorway with no headlights for a good half hour.

After being bombarded with Harry Potter quotes all day and the earth grounding fact that 90% of our relationships will deteriorate by the time we go to university... Everyone had reason to be positive!

For the next few days Mr Hay enjoyed a bountiful resource of Peter Vardy quotes to humour his class with a substitute for his sometimes questionable humour.

Unfortunately, this will likely be a one off trip and never repeated. Alex Tees concluded, "I live with the survivors guilt, knowing that us Year 13 philosophers are likely the only year group that will be able to witness the majesty that is Peter Vardy."

Normand-Oui!

By SAPPHY Dunn 8Y & ALICE Watmough 8Y

An early start at around 6:45 am surprisingly meant a bundle of bustling children boarding the double-decker coach. Many suitcases later, the pupils piled on, fighting for a seat on the back row, kitted out with enough food and entertainment (including lots of Nintendo's) to last through a zombie apocalypse. At about 10:00am, they stopped at a service station to raid KFC and Burger King, the time in the morning for calories!

Finally, after reaching the ferry, the children were free to explore the arcades, shops, cafe and obviously, the 3-7 year olds' play area. After midnight on the 25th of October, around 30 shattered students were welcomed to château de la Boudonnière in Normandy, the North of France with a 'chocolat chaud' and 'madeleine' after a nearly 15 hour journey.

An early start the next morning consisted of many grumpy faces and activities throughout the day such as bread making, aero ball, archery, orienteering, feeding animals and climbing; 3 favourites being the mud assault course (involving more mud than cross country), visiting Mont Saint Michel and making new friends at the goats' cheese farm. The trip was important to develop the students' language skills as the instructors only spoke French to them. Each day there were 3-4 activities during the day and an evening activity, leaving free time to explore the chateau's surroundings of lakes, fields, woods and of course, the astro-turf. Alice Watmough's favourite activity was the mud assault course. She said, "it was cold, wet and hard but I still enjoyed getting muddy with my friends."

The Year 8s had chances to visit the abbey of Mont Saint Michel and venture through the gift shops at every corner. The hardest part: not spending all their euros on a single snow globe. Another trip out in France was to a goat cheese farm where the students had fun grooming, feeding and making new found friends with the goats. They learnt about the upkeep of the goats and two students, (Bobby Kneale 8Y and Elspeth Jolly 8Y) even got the incredible opportunity to taste test some goat's milk straight from the udders. Miss Bradbury was the only teacher to 'volunteer' to taste the milk and she seemed to enjoy it!? Afterwards, the pupils could purchase the goat's cheese, not quite realising what the foul consequence was going to be on the way home. The food was very good, most of the people on the trip agreed, but no one could resist the last night delicacy of the moist, juicy, succulent, squidgy snails.

On the last day, a leaving disco and talent show was held with, quality performances such as 'choreography' to All the Single Ladies, the Macarena, the worm, a gymnastic performance and lots of funky costumes. It was an amazing experience that all the participants thoroughly enjoyed. Thank you to Mr Holland, Miss Bradbury, Mrs Cook and Mr Cook who helped to organise and supervise the trip.

Photographs from the Year 8 Normandy Trip.

"...a thrilling and emotional journey."

School activities

The Dast-Egg-ly Zarg strikes again!

By CALLUM Miller 7X

On the evening of Friday 16th September a throng of Year 7s flocked outside top gate, waiting eagerly for the social evening to commence. When the gates were opened the students, impatient to begin, surged forward, and swept in an excited wave towards the gym where they were to be registered.

Exhilarated screams and shouts echoed round the school as ecstatic Year 7s were soon barrelling around the school as they played the String Game, attempting to aid their group in the task of finding pieces of string to tie together, but despite everyone's best efforts Group 1 succeeded in their aims and cruised to a comfortable victory.

However, the weather limited their time outside as it began to rain. Forced to retire to the gym, the groups were separated and instead, the Year 7s were assembled into forms. A series of thrilling games were played and fierce rivalries sparked up between the forms, 7X, Y and Z, who were all determined to win. Sitting in a line getting ready to pass the ball to the person behind, the forms prepared to begin playing. The people at the front of each form's line picked up the ball and soon it was like a blur being passed from hand to hand at lightning speed down each row. Although the forms were reluctant to stop, the game was concluded and Mr Robinson led the pupils outside on to middle court and then sorted them into groups. It was announced that we were playing the Great Egg Drop and we had to prevent the Dastardly Zarg from destroying the world's chicken population.

Soon the Dastardly Zarg emerged and with his bin bag cape billowing out behind him, spoke into his loudspeaker sounding suspiciously like Mr Robinson. The Dastardly Zarg told the energetic Year 7s that they had to prevent an egg smashing when dropped from Casterby stairs using only a bin bag, 5 bamboo canes and 3 balloons. When building these magnificent contraptions, the Year Sevens had the time of their life. Using great teamwork, every group attempted to prevent the eggs from smashing. Although only a few groups succeeded, everyone had lots of fun. Ethan Moore (7X) told everyone that it was his favourite activity and he had greatly enjoyed seeing Mr Robinson dressed up.

Competing against other forms had made the Year 7s work up a huge appetite, but lucky for them it was dinner time. There was a colossal amount of pizza consumed as the their appetites seemed almost endless; all that was left for the teachers was salad. Once the pizza source had run dry and all the students were full to the brim, it was time for the disco! "With music blaring out of the speakers, and the dance floor overflowing with people dancing, the atmosphere was incredible," commented Joe Glentworth (7X). Some people who had never even danced before discovered a new love of music and dancing. Lots of Year 7 pupils said that the disco was the most enjoyable part as they enjoyed dancing and partying with their friends. However after some incredible dancing, everyone's energy was running low and a vigorous Macarena concluded the fantastic evening.

From start to finish, the evening was a big success and went flawlessly, with Year 7s enjoying every single moment thoroughly.

Rawlinson's suc-chess!

By BEN Wong 13RDH

Fischer, Kasparov and Carlsen are renowned for dominating in the world of chess, but a true battle of intellect was held at Senior House Chess in late November. Bowen. Braben. Bassett. These rising chess geniuses led Rawlinson to a surprising upset, dethroning the supposedly invincible Ayscough Chess team, which has held the title of 'Only Chess Team that turns up' for countless years.

The first highlight of this immortal Thursday lunchtime was a battle between Ayscough's Edward Berry and Rawlinson's Sebastian Bowen. Berry with the white pieces began with C4 – an unusual opener, yet deadly if left unchecked. Bowen, seemingly dazed by this bold opener, managed to spot the best response, D5 – attempting to secure the important centre squares. The game continued with standard chess theory, both carefully following prepared lines and developing pieces systematically. It seemed as if the game would lead to a draw with the two players having similar board positions on even points. Suddenly, Berry blundered. A hanging, unprotected bishop was instantly snapped up by Bowen. Bowen proudly replaced a white bishop with a black knight taking a lead on Berry; being down a piece is detrimental in a game of chess. This was however, a fatal mistake from Bowen. Berry seized an advantage with this sacrifice with a barrage of checks by utilising two knights and a queen to dismantle the black defence, forcing Bowen to give up a bishop and a rook. Berry did not stop there. With an astounding 5 consecutive checks, Bowen was unable to maintain any form of control and the game, and with that, Berry reached a swift checkmate.

Rawlinson's chess dream did not end here. Daniel Bassett, a chess prodigy from 12SM, took to the board, armed with an impressive repertoire of chess theory, seeking to rectify his peer's defeat. He faced off against Ben Wong from Ayscough. With Wong developing his kingside bishop to C4, it became clear to Bassett that he would be playing against the Italian game. Without a moment of hesitation, Bassett replied with the King's Indian Defence. A game of attrition ensued, which eventually resulted in Bassett having a far stronger board position. Desperate for a way to recover, Wong went for a last-ditch effort, attempting to gain a pawn advantage, he sniped the undefended B7 pawn with a queen. Yet he had fallen into the famous Urusov Gambit. Bassett manoeuvred his knights to trap Wong's queen, which led to its capture. At such a large deficit, Wong resigned on move 21 – a swift and easy victory for Bassett and for Rawlinson.

Hansard did not remain silent in this competition. Despite the absence of participants against Ayscough, a promising, young upstart barged into the room to do battle with Rawlinson, announcing his arrival with a proud, yet cool: 'I heard somebody asked for a chess prodigy'. William Chico's interest for chess began over two months ago, after a crushing and embarrassing defeat from Samuel Braben. His lust for vengeance drove him to undergo one of the most intense Rocky montages the chess world has ever known. He studied works of Tal, Karpov and Capablanca profusely and adapted their works into his own unique style. His opponent was none other than Samuel Braben himself. After an interview with Caistor Focus, Chico stated: "I will destroy Sammy, he is no match for my superior intellect. I have played against the computer every day. I have managed to beat level five and I am currently trying my best to defeat level six." Chico warmed up with a daily chess challenge which he solved immediately (with the help of others.) He strode confidently into the battle arena, ready to wreak furious revenge on Braben, his chess nemesis. Chico was defeated in 4 moves.

Despite the disappointment and heartbreak from Hansard, this was an outstanding victory for Rawlinson, who managed to come ahead of the other two houses by a point, followed closely by Ayscough, and then Hansard. This was an exciting moment for CGS chess.

Shoulder scoulding

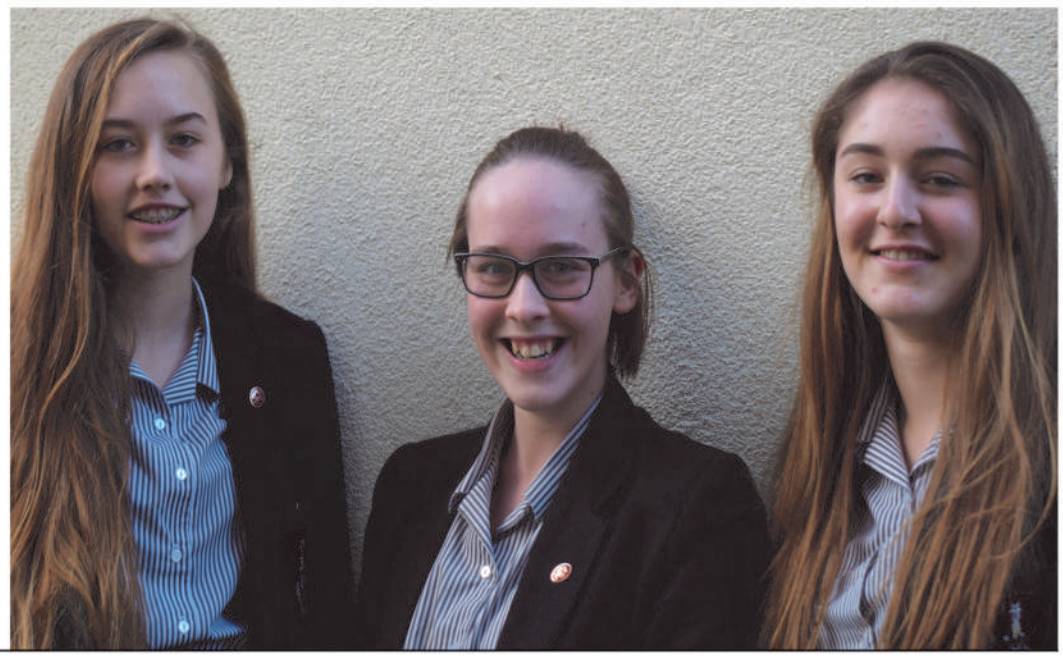
By JASMINE Burnley 13RDH

Year 11 House Public Speaking, the annual battle of words, commenced on 16th November, with the three houses going head to head on topics of their choice. Oliver Levitt-Allen, Matthew Fieldsend and Ewan Martin of Rawlinson discussed the impact of memes on politics whilst Hansard's Culum Bond, Toby Hibbert and Henry Montgomery questioned secularism and religion's place in modern society. But the Ayscough team shouldered their way to the front of the competition with their debate on 'are shoulders sexy really?'

Main speaker for the winning team, Jyothi Cross, said that she wanted to portray an issue that "could be seen as funny but is also serious" and as a self-described feminist, the issue on what she called over-sexualisation of women was extremely important to her and her team members: Tegan Hinch and Abby Bower. They believe that this issue is particularly prevalent within fashion and clothing and it is also quite a topical point due to the ongoing arguments over dress codes, particularly those in the United States. The team used the example of many US schools which often impose a multitude of restrictions. Having heard about how girls are urged to cover their shoulders at all times, the team wanted to speak out against this, declaring that "a girl's clothing is never distracting".

However, the competition was close, with points being awarded for interaction with the audience, clear delivery, introduction to the topics and the handling of questions. Mr McTernan described those taking part as "very good, passionate speakers" whilst also congratulating the "very well organised chairing of the debates".

Overall, it is clear that all teams brought their very best to the challenging competition with testing and sometimes controversial themes. The three main speakers: Jyothi Cross, Culum Bond and Matthew Fieldsend and their teams delivered strong, clear arguments that left the audience with something that they could seriously consider.



Children in Need

Children in Need... of costumes

By MOLLY Davy 11Z and RHIANNA Humphrey 9Y

Once again Caistor Grammar School was faced with the challenge of raising money and designing costumes for Children in Need. Essentially every student and teacher in the school arrived in either their own clothes or fancy dress to support the cause. Many of the costumes were extravagant: some were simple, some were funny, and many were downright strange! Even though there weren't quite as many costumes as usual, the ones which made an appearance were far superior to those in the previous years; many of the imaginative outfits had never even been seen before at Caistor Grammar School, and all of them were totally unforgettable. Some of the most memorable and creative ideas that stood out from the crowd included the Peaky Blinders, dragons, and most notably, inflatable dinosaurs.

While individual costumes certainly looked good, the ones that caught our attention were those who came in as couples or in group fancy dress. Among the many group outfits, one of the best was the Year 13 girls, who dressed up as a band of air hostesses; even without a pilot the idea still took off! Without fail, Mr and Mrs Cooke came in an inevitably creative couples' costume, portraying characters from the TV sensation 'The Big Bang Theory'. But to top them all, the comical couple, Mr Shepherd and Mrs Ellerby, who represented the P.E department, joined forces to dress up as the 118 -118 men.

Mr Shutes commented: '100% it was a successful day'. Mr Hopkins said of his first fancy dress day at Caistor Grammar School that "The costumes were outstanding. My favourite staff costume would have to be the Cookes' 'Big Bang Theory'. To sum up Children in Need in one word, it would be: 'Fantastic'". Matthew Thompson, the school's Performing Arts technician, claimed that "[It was] an inspiring day to show the caring nature of the school."

It is clear that all of the students enjoyed the events of the day, even if not all of them took part in the dressing in wacky attire. Luke Griffiths, 9Y, said that, "The costumes were very impressive and out of the ordinary. It really showed the creativity of our school."
Not only was money raised from dressing up but also from one of Caistor Grammar Schools' famous cake sales which, as usual, was hugely successful in raising lots of money for the cause. The cakes were delicious and tasted even better at the thought of helping other children who are most in need.

To end the day on a high, it has been counted that Caistor Grammar School has raised an enormous £888 in total for Children In Need, which will help children with disabilities and difficulties around the country. The cause is one close to our hearts as many children are affected by illnesses and poverty throughout the country. It is clear that everyone rose to the challenge of helping the children that truly are in need. Overall, it was great day and a memorable occasion that allowed students to have lots of fun and express themselves while most importantly raising money for a great cause.

Spectacular dancing

By ABBY Reece 8X

On Sunday 19th of November, at 2.30pm, people gathered in Grimsby, anticipating the event of the year: the 'Children in Need Dance Spectacular'. Five gifted students from our school performed in a huge dance event at Grimsby Auditorium, along with other local dancers. Over 20 dance teams attended, each with their own unique routines and exciting costumes. They performed for a huge audience which included many proud parents and locals and entertained them for the entire afternoon. Many of the teams spent time rehearsing for days and producing intricate outfits to fit in with their thematic dance routines. Three students at this school performed as part of a team called 'Blaze', and Abby Reece performed as part of a team called 'Footlights'. 'Footlights' wowed the crowd as they danced to the dramatic Les Miserables. The audience, who watched with delight, paid £11 for tickets, all of which went to the great cause of Children in Need. The talented and dedicated students that took part in this fundraiser include: Charlie Henderson 8Y, Caitlin Beaumont 9Z, Alex Henderson 12JK, Abby Reece 8X, and a former student, Ella Suckling. Ella said of the event: "Rehearsals weren't too bad because we had performed the dances before at the dance festival. The stage, however, was a lot bigger than we were used to, but it felt amazing to perform for such an amazing cause and it was a lovely experience." A member of the audience claimed that "it was really good how all the dance teams came together to raise money for Children in Need." Grimsby Auditorium holds 1,200 people and the show almost filled this which is a great achievement as it was organised just by two teens from Grimsby. This is the very first year this has taken place, and hopefully it will continue in the years to come.

School Production

'A tale as old as time...'

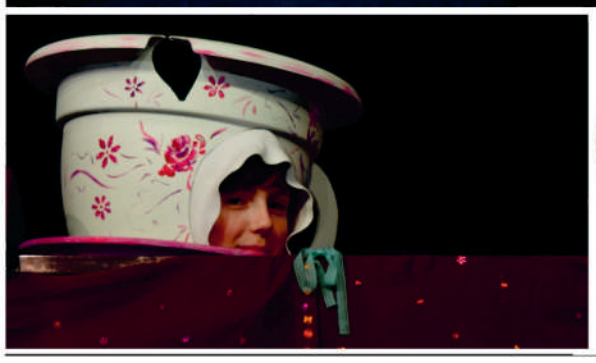
By ELLIE Brooke 10x

In October, the curtains closed to thunderous applause after a final rendition of '*Beauty and the Beast*' and *'Be Our Guest'*. This year the Reds introduced us to, not the entrancing world of Oz or the notorious streets of New York, but instead nineteenth century France – minus the grit and gore. Audiences were treated to spells, songs and spectacular storytelling across three nights of musical distinction. Despite being simple in plot (who doesn't know classic Disney?) by staging and costume standards, Beauty and the Beast was our most ambitious musical yet.

After an initial scream of relief in the green room, we had concluded that the cold September Sundays had been worth it - and that the considerable catching up that had to be done had paid off in the most rewarding way. Before analysing how successful a CGS production can be, we have to start with the September preparation. As ever the story starts, not with a prince turning away a beggar, but with blustery, voluntary weekends in the unquestionably cold New Hall. While most were still in bed dreading facing the chill that lay outside, our cast, whether main part or villager, was ready for an undeniably difficult yet unforgettable experience. The hours of learning, rehearsing, relearning and performing a two hour musical under the watchful eyes of Mr. Harris (Director extraordinaire), Mrs. Thompson (genius Musical Director), and Mrs. Jago (our wonderful Creative Director) were certainly memorable.

While cast were important, this timeless classic could not have been the spectacle it was without the hard work, patience and dedication of the Tech Team, comprised of Guy Annis, Joe Shilling, Pippa Baugh, Olivia Borgstrom, Dakota Sylvan, Isaac Dunn and Ben Hughes, who were lead by Mr. Robinson. The Tech team is driven, professional, and have a great attitude," commented Henry Montgomery, Year 11, who gave the Beast such likability many people came to close to tears (or they did in Sapphy Dunn's, Year 8, experience). "The whole crew is great. Everyone does their part and brings everything together."

Whether performers were returning to the stage or celebrating their Town Hall debut, it also couldn't have been done without an exquisite orchestra to bring Alan Menken's music to life. The chorus is also a group in need of thanks and congratulations due to their wholehearted delivery of such crucial songs, really adding another dimension to the already superb show. Thanks must also be extended to the choirmaster Imogen Horton, Year 10, for keeping a lively group of people in order and in time. Our penultimate group of unsung heroes are arguably the most creative of the entire show. It was their job to craft costumes, fix zips, and cinch waistlines, with no goal other than the smooth running of the show. The creation of costumes such as Mrs. Potts and Madame la Grande Bouche, stunned the audience with the thought and time gone into making them the exceptional outfits they were. Prop makers and loaners are also in need of recognition, for making the scenes even more real. Of course this list is not complete, but we extend the biggest of gratitude to everyone who got involved, no matter their role. A final body of people to extend our greatest thanks to hasn't been mentioned yet: you! On behalf of the cast crew, orchestra, staff, and everyone involved at CGS; thank you for coming (if you did) to see Beauty and the Beast!



School production

‘And last but not Beast…’

By THEO Holman 12DW and REBECCA Wells 13GJ

The environment behind the scenes is one that can never truly be portrayed to someone who hasn’t experienced it. From the teachers to the techies, everybody pulls their weight. Anyone who has been involved will agree that there truly is a community that thrives in the background, helping and joking with one another, to ensure that everything is as it should be. And, as we find year after year, it pays off tremendously, as we are once again greeted with a tear-pricking production. We interviewed two of the main powers behind this awe-inspiring performance; Mr Harris (whose responses you can see at the bottom of the page), and Mrs Thompson:

“I’ve found this year that, yet again, it is a fantastic experience, and one that I’m proud to be a part of. The cast, chorus, orchestra and tech team all did a fantastic job, and it paid off!” says Mrs Thompson, the jovial woman responsible for the fantastic musical performances: “Once again I had a wonderful time leading the orchestra through the romantic tale—what they produced was beyond a fairytale.”

Henry Montgomery, the man behind the mask, said this of his beastly transformation: “It was such a great experience to take part in an amazing production like this. The people around school… you get to see a different side to them, even when they’re not in character. Everyone does their part and it just brings the whole thing together to be so incredible, the crew especially – they are the ones who made it possible. The tech team are so driven and professional; they made the play what it was really. Overall, it was amazing.”

“There was an overwhelming sense of community all the way through; I felt like I was part of a big family. My role was to ensure that the microphones were ok, so there was a lot of pressure on me to work efficiently and quickly. It was good pressure though, the kind that gives you a massive sense of accomplishment.” said Emily Shilling of the tech team.

Drawings by Ethan Dolby;11Z, Quote by Henry Montgomery; 11Y

The brains behind the Beast

“When I first decided that we would be doing Beauty and the Beast, I had quite a few worries,” explained Mr Harris, the ultimate driving force behind the school production, when interviewed this afternoon. “first of all, we had the problem of the transformations. There you have two major transformations that are performed on stage, before our very eyes. And I can remember thinking ‘how on earth are we supposed to get this right?’ on multiple occasions. The hardest of the two was probably in the finale, because we couldn’t use the silhouette curtain to smooth out the visuals, as we could at the start.

“The other major problem I had was the costumes; in the past we’ve had one or two challenging ones, but this time around we had about seven, and they weren’t easy. To get Lumiere’s hands to function on command, or to perfect the tiny body of Chip, or even to find a convincing yet expressive headpiece for the Beast, were challenges in themselves. Then to add the usual difficulties of the orchestra, choir, lighting and acting; I was worried it would be too much.

“One of my lasting memories of the entire production is from the very first rehearsal. I can vividly remember walking to the hall, with nothing on my mind except; ‘have we bitten off more than we can chew?’ on constant loop in my mind. With some of the main actors never having such big roles before, it could easily have gone very wrong, but as soon as we began, these worries were completely eradicated. They had their characters nailed from the get go, and absolutely blew me away with their determination and perseverance.

“By however much I seemed to challenge them, every single actor was able to raise their game to meet the expectations, even with some incredibly hard stretches of music, very fast scene changes, and some absolutely incredible costume changes.

“I am immensely proud of everyone who played a part in the development of this play. The production exceeded all expectations I had to such an extent that it was, on three separate occasions, absolutely magical.”

Editorial: It's a mad, mad world...

It's a mad, mad world ladies and gents. Dare I say ladies and gents? Who would have thought that one's gender would be such a controversial topic? Who would have thought politics would become so chaotic? The question of 'who would have thought?' is asked so frequently in 2017. Why? Because we live in an age of madness of course.

A 100 year reflection

By EDWARD Berry 13DS

This year marks the hundred year anniversary since the Bolshevik's famous overthrow of the Provisional Government in 1917. So, why should you care? It would be an understatement to declare this event the most influential event of the 20th Century. Hailed as the victory of the workers, the event was the victory of Communism. What followed was a century of madness. Death, suppression and terror stained the 20th Century. Communism emerged in countries such as China, Cambodia, Vietnam, Cuba, covering 4 out of the 7 Continents. Statistics estimate that these regimes killed an estimated 94 million people. If one was to count to that number, it would take just under 10 years. It was one year, however that gave each revolution its momentum. A catalyst for the following revolutions, the 1917 Revolution changed the course of history.

November the 11th marked a day of reflection. Once a year, Britain unites to remember those who fought for us and continue to fight in our wars . The thought of war has become distasteful to the individual and to that I challenge why? It is experience that chooses our preferences, whether being our favourite book, film or food, we often let our past dictate our lives. Reflection is a powerful ally. It can help us choose from right and wrong. History tells us that war is not bad but egregious but ask yourself, what else does History tell us?

Whether you study history or not, it is hard to argue against its importance in today's society. We must reflect, remember and forge on, anything else would be madness.

What are you thankful for? Your new car your parents bought you? The new TV in your room? We should all be grateful for anything we receive, but we should be aware of what we're not grateful of. The fact I write, speak and listen freely makes my thankful for what our country is today. The Bolshevik rule suppressed free speech, Mao's Cultural Revolution removed any literature before Mao's control in 1949. The narrow slice we live in never fails to amaze me. It was only 30 Years ago when the people of Romania overthrew their dictator and beheaded him. The brutal facts of history are often the realest.

It would be foolish to ignore the Bolshevik overthrow, and even more foolish to ignore the terror that followed. We cannot change history but to reflect is to learn, and to learn is to overcome. I plead the reader to research the events such as 1917 Revolution and realise that if we do not learn from history, we are doomed to repeat it.

Ho-Ho-Help Me

By GEORGIA Metcalfe 13DS

The madness of the modern day world certainly has us all wondering whether things could get any worse...they can. Although Christmas is going to be great this year, that doesn't take away that it's the maddest time of year. With sales coming out of retailers' ears and people fighting over the last item on sale, it would be wrong to say that it's the 'most wonderful time of the year'.

While Christmas Day itself is only stressful when it comes to the cooking, the festivities around the event however are what drive people mildly insane. It all begins with Black Friday; we adopted this capitalist tradition from the materialistic Americans and now the shops are crammed with people fighting over TVs and running over people with trolleys. Although no injuries have ever been reported because of this day, 2017 could easily be the year that it changes. Even the days leading up to this momentous event are busy – once the sales begin, people act like hungry vultures trying to pick up a scent of the cheapest iPhone. Ultimately the day is entirely anticlimactic, but suddenly...December. It hits us right in the face and the panic sets in. People pack the shop floors like sardines, each one hunting for what it is that they need the most presents.

Buying people gifts is more stressful than some of us would like to admit, especially when it comes to Secret Santa; it's never fun buying someone a co-worker a product that you didn't know they were allergic to (I swear I don't speak from experience...). Christmas day comes, and in between the mountain of presents and large amount of mulled wine, things become less pressured. But it isn't long before the nation is hit with another curveball - Boxing Day. It strikes too soon, and all your Christmas money is flushed down the drain buying the one thing you didn't get from Santa. These sales highlight that Christmas is no longer about gathering as a family, or even celebrating religion, but instead getting the most from your Christmas bonus. People are driven crazy and obsess over saving money, but they forget what the Christmas season is truly about: Eating way more than you can manage.

In the midst of all the seasonal madness, we should raise a glass to 2017: Donald Trump has one year less in office, Mugabe has resigned, and it's so cold it might even snow! It isn't all that bad. It is important to realise that although it is the maddest day of the year, it can also be the most serene. It is a time to reflect on year we have faced, the challenges we have accomplished. So when your little sister wakes you up at half five, there's method in the madness.

The real losers

By SAPPHY Dunn 8Y

We are all aware of sexism in sports but exactly how far does this problem stretch and is it really seen as an issue? The best paid female English football player, Steph Houghton, earns £65,000 a year, whereas Wayne Rooney earns £300,000 a week. Compared to men, 81% of sportswomen felt they were underpaid. This type of prejudice is not seen just in the sporting industry, but in every aspect of modern day life – a surprise, as you wouldn't think it would still be an issue in 2017. Some would argue that women's sports tend to create less revenue than men's; therefore they do not deserve equal pay as they are 'creating' less. However, it is also argued that women put equal amounts of time and effort into their dedicated sports yet still cannot manage to earn as much as their male counterparts.

There have also been issues in women's sports not being funded as much as men's: In March, a male and female cricket team went to India to compete, and while the men's team was funded to travel in Business Class, the women's team were only had enough money to fly in the Economy Class. While this isn't a huge issue, it indicates that there is clearly an imbalance in the industry. Name five professional female football players. Now name five professional male football players. How much easier was it to name five male football players? It is pure madness. Most people around school think that they do see more men's than women's sports on TV because men's sports are much more widely broadcasted and therefore have a larger audience compared to women's football.

The majority of students at this school can't name many women's football players. This is because it is barely advertised at all! It is much harder to find anything in the media about women's football, and this is an outrage. It is no less impressive or important than any sport played by a man, yet this seems to be the view of the people who inform us with news.

The sports curriculum is also separated as male students play football and female students play hockey.

There are very mixed views across the female students of the school whether they prefer hockey or football, and similar views across the male students. Mr Shutes from the Physical Education department explained why the PE lessons where so different between genders. He said that the sports that are included in lessons partially depend on the people in the group, and whether they play a lot of the chosen sport out of school. Also, it depends on what teachers are able to teach the sports based on their abilities. Many competitions are gender separated as there are far less boys' hockey competitions than girls.

Overall, all of these factors still manage to keep a gender barrier between girls playing football and rugby and boys playing hockey and net ball. It can leave people feel segregated, something that no one should put up with in the modern day.

So, we know that women's sport is not as well received as men's and this leads to less revenue and a conclusive pay gap. But can we really trace this back to sexism? In both a short and long answer: Yes. If, in the past, women had been given the same opportunities as men, then there would be an equal playing field (pardon the pun); however, we still have a lot of catching up to do when it comes to being seen the same as males. The sporting industry just highlights these issues tenfold.

Mugabye

By ADAM Pountney 13AHO

Robert Mugabe once said that only God could overthrow him from power in Zimbabwe. Unfortunately for himself, and fortunately for the people of Zimbabwe and the people of the world, he has been proven hilariously wrong. Following a coup d'état on the 14th November by members of the Zimbabwean Armed Forces, and a situation in which his party Zanu -PF decided to switch allegiance from Mugabe to the now newly installed President Emmerson Mnangagwa, President Mugabe (after a bizarre television address where he simply didn't mention the sword of Damocles hanging above his head; the sword being the simple fact that pretty much everyone in Zimbabwe was against him) decided to begrudgingly resign on the 21st November.

Mugabe is, in a slight understatement, certainly a contentious figure, whose legacy will certainly be debated and discussed for many years to come. Mugabe, it can be argued was one of those revolutionary leaders who helped signal the final end of colonialism within Africa, and his ascension to the leadership of Zimbabwe after the collapse of the former British colony Rhodesia (which had illegally declared independence from the UK in 1965) after the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 showed Mugabe to be democratic; the public voted Mugabe into a landslide victory, winning 59 out of 100 seats; the former white leader of the illegal Rhodesia, Ian Smith, merely won 20 seats. Mugabe also helped reform the country, creating a massive expansion in education; in 1980, Zimbabwe had 177 secondary schools, by 2000, it had 1,548. Mugabe's leadership also helped levels of child immunisation were rise from 25% of the population to 92%. So, Mugabe in some regards was a good leader. Sadly, 'some' is the operative word there. Mugabe also managed to utilise vicious and brutal tactics in order to stay in power. In 2005, Mugabe purposely orchestrated a famine to attempt to win votes. Zimbabwe's economy has also collapsed during Mugabe's leadership, with power, water, health and communications systems in a state of decay, and shortages of foods and gasoline. Inflation in Zimbabwe in 1998 was 48%. By 2008, it was 79,600,000,000%. Zimbabwean dollar notes rose to increments of one hundred million dollars. Mugabe, well and truly sat by and let the Zimbabwean economy collapse.

But recently, Mugabe's level of dictatorial leadership has taken new and bizarre turns. In 2015, Mugabe fell down a set of steps and then forced his security team to ask photographers to delete the images they had captured of Mugabe's tumble. Due to the collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar early in the decade, Mugabe then bought in stacks and stacks of US dollars. Mugabe ordered his government to print their own US dollars, featuring a design not at all similar to any US dollar printed in the USA. Symbolic of the collapse of his country over his leadership, Mugabe decided to empty all his prisons because he couldn't afford to pay for them.

So, let's just say it's not exactly a shame Robert Mugabe has decided to pack his bags and leave.

House Music

Senior House Music? Tell me more!

By ALEX Mottram 12FC & NEIVE Atkin 12FC

This year presented the ever greater challenge of producing the House Music performances. Being the first time the event has taken place in the school gym (as opposed to the Town Hall), House Captains, staff and those involved were incredibly apprehensive of how successful the affair would be. However, our doubts were ill founded. As usual House Music showcased the best musical talent that Caistor Grammar School has to offer, allowing students to display their passion for the arts, or simply to get involved for their house, and to have fun.

This year, the senior performances shone through when Ayscough took the overall lead with a huge score of 107 points, followed by a close call between Hansard with 104 and Rawlinson with 103. The scores of the vocal groups were intensely close with Rawlinson's colourful, energetic performance of ABBA's *Dancing Queen* scoring 19 points, followed by Ayscough's comical interpretation of Rihanna's *Umbrella* finishing with 18 points. The use of props in Aycough's performance definitely made theirs one that the participants will never forget! However, it was the Hansard Vocal Group's rendition of a Grease mash up, winning with a massive 20 out of 20 points, which stole the show, setting the standards incredibly high for the other two houses. Powly Wijayaratna from 13DS performed in the group, describing it as "euphoric" explaining how it was an excitement to take part in. The mash up included many Grease favourites from the infamous *Greased Lightening* to the favourite *You're the One That I Want*, the range of solos in the routine making the performance a delight for everyone.

As a rare occurrence in House Music history, the first place tie between Ayscough and Rawlinson stunned the audience. Ayscough's, Emma Thomsen treated the audience to a wonderful performance of *You Don't Own Me* by *Grace* and Alex Mottram's splendid show for Rawlinson of *Burn* from the musical *Hamilton* came neck in neck and were both a delight to judge. The musical genius that is Sue Baker, awarded them both 18 out of 20 points. Alex Mottram from 12FC explained that the experience of performing as "overwhelming and extremely gratifying". Henry Montgomery performed a beautiful version of *John Mayer's Gravity* scoring himself an excellent 17 out of 20 points, awing the audience with his exquisite voice.

As the performance was in the gym for the first time, the pressure fell on the technical team (lead by Mr. Robinson) to show everyone that having the event in the gym wouldn't be the disappointment many thought it would. Needless to say, they rose to the challenge and successfully showed that no matter where we are, House Music will always be the triumph of an afternoon it has been in previous years. During all the pieces, while the audience sat back and enjoyed the concert, the technical team listened attentively to the sound levels to ensure each and every song sounded the best it could. They worked magic to make the gym sound like a concert hall and all did all the songs justice.

Overall, both students and House Captains showed extreme enthusiasm over the whole day, and an enjoyable time was had by all who participated in and watched the event. Even due to the unusual setting, the students took the opportunity to shine and they most certainly put on an unforgettable show.

Ayscough's title can't be moved

By HOLLY Bradbury 8X & LILLY Bell 8X

On Wednesday 15th November school juniors were buzzing with excitement for an upcoming day filled with music and drama. Students dressed in green, yellow and blue prepared to perform live in front of a huge audience of staff, peers and three spectacular judges, in the aim to impress the eager group of spectators and score points for their house, all for the purpose of winning the glory of the house shield at the end of the year.

Many points were awarded to the outstanding and extremely brave soloists that gave a strong start to the afternoon and had the terrifying task of starting the events off. Beth Sykes (8Z) impressed the audience with her cover of 'City of Stars'. The judge Susan Baker said she "captured the feel of the style" and Beth commented that she "loved it. I am proud of myself and I think that Pearl deserved to win." Pearl McCann (8Y) was victorious for Hansard, singing her moving rendition of 'A Man Who Can't Be Moved', accompanied by her ukulele. She had "a lovely tone" with "natural presentation". Pearl herself said, "I am proud and I feel really good because I won for the House!" Lastly, but by no means least, Lucy Chairman (8Z) captivated the audience with her version of 'She Will Be Loved'. The judge said that "she did well sustaining longer notes". Although all performances were breath-taking, it was Pearl who achieved the top spot and won the section for her house. Scoring just under Pearl was Beth with seventeen points and finally, Lucy scored sixteen saying, "I am pleased that I have achieved one mark better than last year." All three vocal soloists are very talented and have done their house proud.

Although the soloists were incredible to watch and listen to, highlights of the afternoon were found within the extremely talented vocal groups from all three houses, with students ranging from years seven to nine. The three stunning performances began with Rawlinson's cover of The Friends theme-song 'I'll Be There for You', which was a hit with the audience. These exciting performances included props such as paper plates for Hansard's spectacular 'Food Glorious Food' from the musical 'Oliver', which gained an amazing score of nineteen out of twenty. Ayscough's vocal group was up next, sure to be competition for the other two houses. They performed 'Passport Home', and the judge commented that they had good staging and lovely vocals from the front line of singers. As the results were announced, the tension increased as each group had done so well. Overall, the marks were hair-raisingly close, with Hansard at the top, dropping only one mark with a score of 19; Ayscough second with 18; and Rawlinson just fell short with a fantastic score of 17. The groups were amazing and captivated the audience with every note; well done to all those who performed.

On top of the awe-inspiring vocal performances, all instrumental pieces were of an outstanding quality. The technical skill of the groups was incredible and each and every one showed skill above what would be expected for their age. Ayscough won the piano duet with an incredible performance from Cindy Bazoua and Stephen O'Donoghue. Rawlinson rose to victory with Dynamic Forces, utilising percussion instruments in their performance as well. Emma Cowan gave a moving rendition of 'I Dreamed a Dream' which gained Rawlinson first place with 18 marks, with Hansard and Ayscough following closely.

Everyone who performed should be proud as they were outstanding and were an excellent addition to this year's Junior House Music. Thank you and well done to all those who performed in the instrumental and vocal groups, solos and duets. Another thank you to Susan Baker for coming to judge and Mrs. Thompson who made this possible. Finally, congratulations to Ayscough - the overall winners of the juniors - who scored a total of 91 points; well done to Hansard with 89; and Rawlinson with 87.

From left: Pearl McCann playing 'Man Who Can't be moved for Hansard Junior Vocal Solo, Rawlinson Junior Vocal Group, Halah Abed accompanied by Mrs Thompson for Hansard Piano Duet.

Mr Hale makes his return

By HOLLY Mottram 13RDH

This year's introductions brought back one of the Saints of our School: Mr Roger Hale. This famous ex-headmaster was resurrected by Year 13 student Katie Searle before Rawlinson's piano duet—When The Saints Go Marching In.

On walked two Year 13s bowing down to their true saint, as 'Mr Hale' walked on. Yes, very slowly indeed. After instructing an audience member to roll down their sleeves, for that is the largest sin of them all, he proceeded to take his place at the glorious lectern.

After informing the jubilant audience of the name of the piano duet, he took his leave, but not before firstly saying he would of course tweet about the event, but also leaving with his final catch phrase—'Good Morning'.

Another highlight of the introductions this year was Ayscough's group instrumental Rule The World. It featured the controversial figure, Kim Jong Un, threatening to "Nuke the US" in order to achieve his ultimate goal: world domination. Luckily his attempts were halted by his second-in-command informing him it was only the music performance called Rule The World.

Hansard was a close second to the Mr Hale Returns introduction after their performance of Kathleen by Catfish and the Bottlemen in the Band section. An innocent Year 13 was in danger of being Catfished by Kathleen! Cheesy though it sounds, the audience found this, and many other introductions hilarious, especially the friends and parents present on the evening performance.

Outdoor Events

White peak walkers

By EMMA Krofchak 13DS

Saturday 30th September saw thirty-one Year 12 students brave three days of intense hiking in the White Peak District of Derbyshire, just weeks after completing a gruelling practice expedition in extreme weather conditions.

Beginning in Eyam, the six groups were briefed and checked by their supervisors before setting off, fuelled with enthusiasm. The criteria of the scheme requires participants to spend at least 7 hours outside, walking a distance of approximately 50km over the whole weekend. Needless to say, the pressure was on, as this weekend was dependent on months of training and preparation: tent pitching, map reading and first aiding were just a few of the skills which the students practised and excelled in the months leading up to the final expedition.

Despite the weather taking a turn for the worst, the groups remained positive—the practice expedition showed they were no strangers to bad weather. Carrying all equipment, food and clothes for the weekend on their back, and independently navigating their way through the unfamiliar Derbyshire hills, the students were ready to tackle any challenges the expedition threw at them.

Keeping each other motivated and entertained throughout the day, the groups arrived at the campsite in Monsal Head in high spirits—although understandably tired. However, it did not stop there: tents needed to be pitched and food was to be cooked before they could finally rest.

The early start of Day 2 was a shock to the system for many of the participants, still weary from the day before—but they pushed through, packing away their equipment and fuelling themselves with a high-calorie breakfast before setting off, with the aim of arriving at Monyash campsite. The weather was in their favour, with the rain clearing, and although the day saw a few navigational setbacks, the students were in the safe hands of Anna Sharp and her team of supervisors and assessors, who observed and kept track of the groups' progress from hidden locations on the route. Despite these glitches, all arrived safely in the early evening just as the weather turned, and began to prepare for their final day.

The idea of being at home and in bed that night was motivation enough to draw the weary travellers from their tents on the morning of the third day, as they started their trek to their final destination: Bakewell.

Showing discipline and determination, the students forced themselves to the end, where they were greeted with none other than a Bakewell tart.

Both mentally and physically challenging, the students should be proud of their achievements—and hopefully leaping at the prospect of Gold!

The annual outdoor challenge

By JORJA Bignell 10Z

Every year a group of courageous Caistor Grammar School students from Year 9 and 10 set out on an unforgettable trip to the Peak District on the school's annual visit to the Hollowford Centre. They spend four days testing themselves with a variety of challenging tasks: from venturing into the depths of caves to conquering the heights of Mount Kinder Scout all whilst building their teamwork, friendships and dedication.

This year, from Friday 6th October to Monday 9th October, 60 students took on this challenge, pushing themselves to their very limits. The first day saw them developing their team building skills, with obstacle courses to test their agility, capabilities and skill, whilst the evening drew a group of these spirited students to take on the test of Mt Kinder Scout, displaying their diligence in every step.

On the second day, the groups covered a range of enthralling activities as more of them climbed this daunting mountain to experience the picturesque views of the Peak District, whilst unnerved students were presented with raft building. With only the basics of rope and timber, they battled their way through the challenge to sink or swim, applying their much-needed skills of communication and craft.

High ropes and caving took them all on a different route on the third day, putting some in a position to face their fears and the high ropes brought their determination to complete the course. With great effort they used their teamwork skills helping each other to overcome the challenge presented to them.

A Year 9 student, Ella Clark, explained that caving in the evening was her most memorable moment, it was an exciting activity for her and she enjoyed the experience, but sadly, the adventure had to come to an end after an exhilarating few days. The team competitions brought everyone's morale back up again on the last day, as they enjoyed the final hours of freedom, including embarking on a course of blindfolded rock climbing.

Georgia Welstead, Year 10, thought that the best part for her was developing friendships with different people, and these exercises tested their new friendships as well as all of the skills they'd developed. But this weekend was memorable for them all and they are especially grateful to the team of the Hollowford Centre for the experience they gave them.

Three peaks, two days

By ABBY Reece 8X

On the 19th of May, I will be participating in the 'Yorkshire Three Peaks' along with fellow student, Emily Quill (8X), in order to raise money for CGS, and a local village school, Kelsey Primary.

The route is 24 miles long and 5,200 ft high, and involves taking on the peaks of Pen-y-ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough, which form part of the Pennine range in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

We have decided to walk the three peaks over a period of two days. It's definitely going to be difficult, but I enjoy walking—the reason I took part is because I was inspired by my experience of outdoor walking in the summer, and wanted to take it further. Not only do both Emily and I have a passion for the outdoors, it's for a great cause!

We are both looking forward to the experience, even if it will be hard. Hopefully, our training will prepare us for the challenge, which involves work on fitness and pacing to make sure that we are up to the task.

On the first day we will be walking up Pen-y-Ghent. Starting at 10am, we will be out for around 7 hours. The peak is 694 metres high, so this will no doubt be testing! We will be staying in a youth hostel for the night, and setting off early the next day—which will be even tougher, as we walk two peaks over 700m high.

Even though it will be mentally and physically demanding, my main concern is getting through the rain—and making sure we have enough snacks!

Individual Stories

Hard(ing) at work!

By POWLY Wijayaratna 13DS & NEIVE Atkin 12FC

From one student led, top quality newspaper to another, Caistor Focus alumni Megan Harding is now Film and TV Editor at the University of Cambridge's newspaper, 'The Cambridge Student'. A first year studying English Literature, Megan has risen up the ranks of journalism – she is in charge of her own section and decides what articles go in there, such as film reviews and 'think-pieces' about a specific director—quite a change from "long lectures" and "churning out monotonous essays"!

Since her first Caistor Grammar School Newspaper Day in Year 7, Megan excelled as a writer, which she credits to her "natural journalistic writing style" (and "nosiness" for stories!), and eventually became an editor for mainly the Editorial section in Year 10. So what drew her to every Newspaper Day for seven years? Not only did she love writing about significant stories like the farewell interview with Mr Hale when he retired and consequently the appointment of Mr Hopkins as the new Headteacher, but she also loved the "real feeling of community that you don't really find much elsewhere".

Megan's personal statement was made unique when she talked about her journalism experience at a student led newspaper, and it also elevated her application at The Cambridge Student. There are so many skills Megan can transfer from Caistor Focus to The Cambridge Student: keeping up momentum whilst working, having creative ideas, and staying on top of current affairs. But it's all worth it, as Megan is envied for having interviewed the likes of Sir Ian McKellan and Caitlyn Jenner, with internship or job opportunities presented to her often (but she really wishes she could have interviewed Emma Thompson when she visited the Union!).

There are actually so many similarities between the Caistor Focus and The Cambridge Student: the editorial meetings are alike, articles are set with the same methods—so much so, "Mr Davey would definitely feel at home at The Cambridge Student!"

This English fanatic started her journalism career writing for the Caistor Focus about school trips, but her future is very bright as she looks toward the prospect of being a writer or director of films, after being an assistant director at the ADC theatre for two shows which she says are "two of the best experiences I've had here so far".

As a school, we are proud of having Megan as a Caistor Focus veteran—we wish her all the best of luck!

Meg says:

We asked Megan for her advice for aspiring journalists...

Q: What kind of characteristics do you need to have to be a good journalist?

A: *I think first of all you need to be really resilient, as there can be quite a lot of rejection in the journalism world, but thankfully that's not so much a problem in Cambridge since we're a student-run paper, so we try and be as inclusive as possible. Mostly you need to be able to think really well on your feet (for example, all of my prepared questions for Sleaford Mods deleted themselves a few minutes before I was about to meet them, so I had to try and remember everything I was going to ask instead, and play it off as intentional at the same time), and to actually be responsive to the answers people give when you're interviewing them. Also I think it's good to try and write as honestly as possible, whenever you can, and not to be afraid of thinking big - some of the opportunities I've had here I never thought I would get, but they do happen, so keep trying!*

Q: Does journalism aid the degree you're studying?

A: *I don't really think it does. I look at the time I spend with The Cambridge Student as quite a separate entity to my degree, but being an Editor at TCS has given me so much free reign to write how I want and about anything I want, with a lot of really lovely people who are just as enthusiastic as me. Plus, there are no lectures involved. In the long run though, if journalism is a career you're interested in, doing some student writing alongside an arts degree is definitely a good call.*

Q: Have you ever suffered from writer's block? If so, how did you overcome it?

A: *Yeah, definitely. I always find the beginning of articles and essays to be the hardest to write, so I normally try and start somewhere in the middle. When I've interviewed someone, I'll make a document of all of the most interesting things they've said that I know I want to include, and as I look through them, I start to find a structure, and connections that I can make, so I just go with it, and soon I'll have a few paragraphs to build on, even if they're not in the right order.*

Q: What can someone do to improve their research skills for journalism?

A: *Think about what interests you most (and if you're not sure, find out!!) and then get reading up about it. I applied for Film and TV Editor instead of another role because I knew that that's what I'd actually be most enthusiastic about when writing or commissioning articles, so it's the same thing for research: you're never going to be excited about researching something you don't like, or writing about something you don't care about, so I'd make sure you find what you like and then stick with it.*

Abdul's wonderful work

By LUKE Griffiths 9Y

On the sixth of September Abdul Wasey figure -headed a charity fundraiser to raise money to enhance old age residents' living experience at the fantastic Caistor Greenacres care home.

Abdul Wasey ,the part time Oxfam worker and intelligent CGS sixth former, decided to push for an enthusiastic charity event at the Caistor Greenacres care home where he had been generously volunteering regularly. His plan involved building a beautiful sensory garden for the residents which was a huge success. Work involved laying flower beds and also cutting back overgrown trees to create added beauty to the blocked residents' views. To raise money for their project Abdul organised a funded fancy dress walk across the Humber bridge conclusively raising £300.

Abdul contacted local gardeners and landscaping companies to volunteer and lend a few hours of knowledge towards their up and coming development. The fundraiser lasted four hours and has been heavily praised by long time care home worker Alan Shepherd, who said: "The group should be very proud of what they did." When we asked Abdul how rewarding was doing the charity work he replied, "well for me it was great to see the residents enjoying and using the beautiful garden we had made for them." Abdul also said that the care home workers and board reacted really pleasantly and were very grateful for them to have created the new garden.

Harry: cricket conqueror

By LUKE Griffiths 9Y

Harry Nickells led Cleethorpes Town Cricket Club to an unprecedented treble and invincible season; his pride resounds in his and teammates' minds.

This year Harry Nickells and fellow team-mates concluded their invincible season with a third cup to seal the treble. Throughout Harry's journey, he described the experience as unbelievable and euphoric, he reminisced how his team had stuck together throughout and how they bonded under great expectations.

Harry described this achievement as the pinnacle of his cricketing career thus far and his cricketing companions were to thank for the team's success. It was not a one man success but a whole team contribution. We asked him how he felt after achieving this immense task. This was he responded: "At the end of it all we thanked each other massively for each contribution as together we became invincible. As a one man performance, it couldn't be done."

When the team played, Harry said that he felt a vibe and he thinks his team felt it too. When the season was concluding and an awards ceremony for the team took place, he described his experience as crazy. The pride exerted from the audience by the amount of applause and congratulations was surreal and made him proud. The numerous medals and awards were very "gratifying" and made him feel proud to be a Cleethorpes town member and now, a conqueror.

On a high (note)

By ALEX Mottram 12FC

On 2nd November, I made my way down to Spalding with my six friends who make up the band 'Salutation' to compete in the BBC Radio Lincolnshire's Song for Lincolnshire Finals 2017- little did we suspect that a few hours later we would be crowned the winners. We contended with six other acts, performing original songs about the Lincolnshire area and its heritage, which was all broadcast live on BBC Radio Lincolnshire. Our song was about an ex-Caistor Grammar student Sean Mumby and his Irish origins. The band consists of two other students of our school: Maya McCann (Year 11), Pearl McCann (Year 7).

We set up our instruments and as the night carried on, we all eagerly anticipated the performance's start, and when it began, we ascended to the stage as the opening act whilst local radio personality Jono Brien introduced the show to listeners all around Lincolnshire. The performance itself went by in a flash and, before we knew it, we were seated back in the audience, watching the rest of the songs being played. From ballads about war memorials, to tunes retelling stories of mushroom ketchup factories, there were cheers and applause from the audience.

The announcer shouted out into the audience that the winning song was 'Sean Mumby's Dancing Feet'; the group was overwhelmed. As our parents erupted in cheers around us, our achievement dawned on us. We humbly accepted the award and played the encore for the audience.

Then, exhausted, we made the hour journey home to get as much sleep as we could before going back to school on Friday. But it wasn't over then—we couldn't go into a classroom without the teachers asking for a performance of our winning piece (which we refused to do!) but we are so proud to call ourselves the winners of the BBC Radio Lincolnshire Song of 2017.

backofthenet

THE SPORTS SECTION OF CAISTOR FOCUS | WINTER 2017

Runs in the family

By HENRY Cullen 9Y

On 23rd November 2017, on a Thursday afternoon, students from Years 7-11 gathered in harsh conditions for the annual house cross -country event. Down at the pavilion, the students waited nervously in the netball courts, preparing themselves for what lay ahead. Tom Wood (9Y) commented on the conditions, saying, "It was very slippy on the course and that the harsh wind was extremely hard to run against." Tom also commented that it was very cold, but overall he "thoroughly enjoyed the cross-country experience". From personal experience, I know that the course was tough for everybody, with a range of terrains such as roads and grass, with uphill and downhill areas testing even the best of athletes.

For most Caistor Grammar School students, cross country isn't about the winning, but it was about taking part, gaining vital points for their house and making it to the finish line, having done their very best.

However as always, it wasn't just the students who faced the tough challenge. Various teachers and sixth formers helped to marshal around the course and support the runners. These students and teachers were the real heroes of the day as if it wasn't for them; we may have all lost our will power or got lost on the brand new course! A handful of teachers and sixth formers, including Mr Davey, Mr Robinson and Edward Harper-Smith (12DW) also put themselves through the pain of running alongside the students and cheering them on.

The first race of the day was run by the Year 10-11 Boys. It was an intriguing race, with Michael Durham (11Y) first home, with Joel Cottingham (10X) finishing a close second. After the race, Michael said he was "Very happy with his performance," and that "it was a fun race". Michael also added that Joel's performance was particularly impressive and that he gave him a "run for his money" and that Joel "will most likely break his record next year, and he definitely deserves to".

However, the stars of the event were the Osborne family, with Louie Osborne (7Z) winning the Y7 Boys race, Sienna Osborne (7Z) winning the Y7 Girls race and Alisha Osborne finishing second in the Y8-9 Girls race. They commented that although cross country is "tough and tiring" but also a "rewarding and fun" experience.

The Year 8 and 9 boys was won by Henry Cullen (9Y), a current record holder, the Y8-9 girls was won by Suzanne Bate(8Y) who showed the older girls how it's done, and the Year 10 and 11 Girls was won by Emily Barratt (11X), the seasoned cross country champion. After the race, Emily said, "It was very hard and very windy, but a extremely enjoyable experience". Emily also added that she was also very "excited to move onto the next level of cross-country", particularly because this was the last time that she would be able to compete in the annual house event..

Overall, the house Cross-country competition can definitely go down as another windy, muddy but also enjoyable and well-organised success. It is important to remember in CGS cross country that position doesn't matter as everyone from the first place runner to the last place runner all gain valuable points for their house. This annual event brings every student from years 7-11 together to work hard and show team spirit for their house, in true Stevie Markham fashion.

Once the numbers were crunched and the scores added up, the winning house was Hansard, with Ayscough and Rawlinson in a close second and third. Each house can be really happy with its results and proud of each and every runner that competed.

It's the final count(y)down

By SAM Redgate-Large 13DS

Over the years Caistor Grammar has established quite a name for themselves in sporting competitions, and the Under 18s netball side has continued the reputation of CGS. The team, which was made up of the best players from Years 11, 12 and 13, walked through their qualifying rounds on the 1st November and came out victorious in an intense and exciting round. As a result of their excellent performance, the girls were rewarded with the opportunity to compete in the county rounds, where they would take on some of the most talented netballers in the whole of Lincolnshire. A tough test, if there ever was one!

The county rounds took place a week later on the 8th November where they engaged in a gruelling test of stamina, playing 8 games on a cold Wednesday morning. The team which arrived at Stamford Junior School to participate in the event had a few late changes to the side which triumphed a week earlier, with Jessica Edwards (12FC) having to drop out of the team days before due to commitments outside of school. However, this opened up spaces in the team for Year 11s Emily Barrett (11X) and Iona Christie (11X) who would fill the gap in the side which Edwards left. I interviewed Grace McGrory (13RDH), who captained the side to victory in the qualifying round as well as in the county round, who recognised the difficult conditions the team had to work under "I think we did fantastically as many of us had only practised together prior to this game, naturally this could have caused a few problems with the different play styles everyone had, so considering the circumstances I think we did well." The tournament was the last time that the girls will play together competitively in the CGS colours and they continued the high standard that they achieved previously: a fitting way to end a fantastic netball career at CGS for all those who participated.

He Shutes, he scores!

By ISOBELLE White 12FC

The Year 10 boys football team competed in the Superzone Under 15s cup again this year, narrowly missing out on retaining their title. It was always going to be difficult to live up to last season's final (a 10-1 win to the CGS boys) and sadly, history was not to repeat itself.

This year's cup final took place on Tuesday 28th of November against Skegness Grammar School, who happen to be the boys' rivals from the previous cup final. Previous to the final, the boys had been undefeated during the group stages, so they entered the final with lots of confidence in their team. Some notable performances by the side since the start of the school year have been their 4-2 win against KEVIGS where James Day (10X) was named man of the match and their impressive 8-1 victory against Gainsborough Academy in round one of the county cup, where Chizu Obu (10X) gave an "outstanding" performance. The Under 15s team best known for their immense speed, allowing them to get past any opposing line of defence. The boys have also displayed strong defensive tactics this season, particularly exhibited by Jack Scotney, as they have conceded very few goals during the group stages of the cup.

Fin Lawrence (10Y) tells us that De Aston School "took the team by surprise" this year as they were hot on the team's heels.

This season has seen the team learning to play without their captain Joey Dawson, who has been out of action for the past two months due to injury. Josh Knapton (10Z) informs us that lots of players have had to "step up" to the challenge of a "Joey-less" team. Josh also mentions a few players who have been notably impressive this season such as Fin Lawrence who has adopted a "leadership role", Joe Potter (10z) who has "grown in confidence" this season and Jack Scotney (10z) who was labelled "Mr Consistent". Mr Shutes, the team's manager, told us that this group of boys are one of the most "committed" to the game that a team has been in a long while and that every one of them is "determined to win".

In a frustrating game, which saw the Caistor attackers denied by an outstanding display from the opposition goalkeeper, Caistor were unfortunately beaten 1-0. The only goal in the game came from superb hold-up play by the Skegness forwards which proved too much to handle on this occasion. Despite this, Liam Doughty (9X) was awarded Man of the Match for his impressive defensive display.

The team can take positives from this game and will be looking to go one step further next year to bring another trophy back home.