



BATLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL & PRIESTLEY HOUSE

Spring 2015 Newsletter



Ofsted – Batley Grammar is a ‘Good School’

We experienced a very intense two days, during the inspection, but at the same time it was a great opportunity to demonstrate and evidence all the hard work and improvements that had taken place since the last inspection in 2013. We are very pleased that Ofsted has judged Batley Grammar School to be a good school, particularly as the current Ofsted framework is more challenging than ever before.

Exploring the Eclipse



On Friday 20 March, pupils in the Primary Phase set up reflective surfaces and pinhole cameras to safely observe the solar eclipse. Despite the clouds, pupils were able to view this exciting spectacle reflected in trays of water. We all found it really exciting!

In the Secondary Phase, STEM students took to the back field to watch the solar eclipse using special glasses. Some students also took part in the ‘National Eclipse Weather Experiment’ and collected data on light, temperature and wind speed at Batley Grammar School during the eclipse. This data has been collected nationally and will be used in scientific research by the University of Reading Meteorology Department.

Year 11 boys make U16 National Football Final

On Wednesday 4 February, the Year 11 boys met Wensleydale School in the semi final of the National Cup. The match had to be played on the 3G astroturf pitch at Batley Sports centre, due to frosty conditions making it impossible to play on our home ground. The game was played at a high intensity from the start, with both teams playing a good standard of football that would be expected of a national



semi final. Within five minutes the pressure that our boys imposed paid off and they were awarded a free kick just outside of the penalty area, around 20 yards out. Ryan Ferguson stepped up to take the free kick and curled it passed their keeper to make it 1-0.

After 21 minutes of football, which included us hitting the crossbar, Lewis Knight found himself with a good opportunity and skilfully beat the keeper making it 2-0. He then used his pace to create a one-on-one with the keeper and after 36 minutes, Lewis carefully put the ball into the bottom right corner to make it 3-0.

The second half was very even for the majority of time, with both teams finding only a few opportunities to score. Slowly, Wensleydale began to creep back into the game, dominating larger chunks and keeping more possession, finally scoring to make it 3-1 with 15 minutes to play. Again they pressed and continued to create chances and a decent strike from their number nine made the score 3-2 with eight minutes to play. This was not a time to panic; a few tactical changes were made by Mr Batley and the situation required all eleven to dig in to ensure their place in the national final. Although the effects of cramp were not on our side, the final whistle blew and we were victorious, clearly deserving the win.

It was extremely pleasing to see the support scattered around the edge of the football pitch which was made up of pupils, staff, parents and our Chair of Governors, Alistair Hartley, who made this comment:

"I watched the semi final this afternoon. All involved were a credit to the school. All players worked very hard in what was a very tough game against a very good opposition. Batley Grammar School raced to a 3-0 lead and then had to stand strong and withstand a spirited comeback. They stuck together when the going was tough and deserve their place in the final. The school should be proud of this fantastic achievement."

We are now awaiting the date and venue of the final. Rumour has it being played at a Premier League football ground.

Reading for Gold!

The New Year has seen our Key Stage 3 Reading Challenge off to a flying start with the award of our first Gold Reading Certificate to year 8 student, Ruby Allen.

At Batley Grammar School, all our students are encouraged to find enjoyment in personal reading. We have a bright, welcoming and well stocked library where our students are supported in their choice of reading material and can strive to reach targets that they often set for themselves. To gain a Gold Award, a student must read and review at least 20 fiction books during the school year and at least half of these must be chosen from a list of recommended titles.



Since the beginning of this school year in September, Ruby has read and reviewed 24 fiction books! This is a tremendous achievement and we congratulate her on her success!

Year 11 Learning Performance

On Friday 30 January our year 11 students were involved in revision skills and interview technique workshops. Learning Performance delivered these excellent workshops, helping students to develop their revision skills in order to help them in their GCSE exams in the



summer. Students were also involved in a two hour interview technique workshop where they prepared themselves for their forthcoming post 16 school and college interviews.

Students were hugely positive, commenting that learning and applying revision skills, such as the use of condensing information into shorter sections and A-mapping, has really benefitted them.

Una McNulty from Learning Performance commented, "Having spent the day with year 11 I can honestly say it was a real pleasure. The pupils were polite, positive and really motivated. I know they all have a bright future ahead of them."

An excellent day all round, and one from which all the students will have really benefitted in their preparations for the summer exams.

Sixth Form Dragons Den

Sixth form students have stepped out of their comfort zone during enrichment sessions over the last few weeks, in the Batley Grammar School's first ever staging of the popular TV programme 'Dragons' Den'.

They worked in teams to research, plan and deliver their business idea pitches to a 'Den' of carefully selected staff. Each group had ten minutes to convince the panel of the effectiveness, sustainability and marketability of their product – talking through client needs, market research, product specifications and aesthetics among other criteria. Some of the ideas included; Zhei Zhei – a 'watering can' air freshener with different scented capsules, Mvses – a revolutionary nail polish solution and Identity – clothing with digital display.

Members of the Den, and other sixth form students, asked some tricky questions including the suitability of product materials, use of different production techniques and meeting market needs – all of which were fielded brilliantly.



BGS retains Highest Rating for Food Hygiene

We are delighted to announce, in partnership with our catering providers ABSolutely Catering, that we have once again retained our Food Hygiene Rating of 5 (very good). This is the highest possible rating and is, in addition to the Gold Award for Healthy Choice, awarded by Kirklees for our commitment to high standards of food hygiene and healthy food options given in March 2014.



For more details on our catering provision, and our menu options, please visit the Catering page on our school website — www.batleygrammar.co.uk.

Easter Activities

On the last day of the spring term, pupils from the primary phase took part in an egg-citing day of activities. All the classes built contraptions to transport an egg either five metres horizontally or one metre vertically. The results were clearly egg-strordinary! There were many different ideas including catapults, winches, counter-balances, cars, even bows and arrows. We used wind powers, motors and other forces. The creativity was amazing. Thanks to all the parents who were able to come into school to help during the day and also to all the parents who came to the assembly to see the results of all that hard work!



Finally, thank you very much to the Parents' Association for giving every child in the Primary Phase a crème egg.



Anti-Extremism Workshop

Earlier this term, Key Stage 4 & 5 students were treated to a hard-hitting play, 'One Extreme to the Other', which tackled extremism in its various forms.

The production, delivered by GW Theatre Company, challenged students into thinking about why people become extremists - either politically or from a religious point of view. The play successfully engaged students and then allowed a dialogue in which the audience had the chance to interrogate some of the characters.

Students were given the chance to explore and discuss the issues raised by the play, in follow up sessions during form time.

Mohammad Sidat, a Year 13 student, commented: "I believe the play was very powerful in showing how easy it is for young people, who are naive, to get misled."



Year 11 visit to Liverpool

In March Year 11 Religious Studies students visited Liverpool's Anglican and Roman Catholic Cathedrals. The visit was arranged to benefit students' work in the second of our two GCSE RS units, Religious Expression in Society, where students consider religious architecture, art, literature, media and music. The students spent an hour at each of the venues, each remarkable and unique in their design. As the trip coincided with Holy Week, the group were lucky enough to see some of the most important aspects of the Christian faith in action.



Author Visit by Niel Bushnell

Children's author, Niel Bushnell, spent a whole day working with students and staff at Batley Grammar School this week. Niel is the award winning author of 'The Timesmith Chronicles'. Two books, 'Sorrowline' and 'Timesmith' make up the series so far, both thrilling fantasy adventure stories with a wide appeal for young readers.

Students in years 6 and 7 were entertained with stories from his own writing exploits and given some ideas of "Where Stories Come From". Some of the students went on to try out their own creative writing skills with Niel on hand to offer his expert advice.

When not writing children's fiction, Niel is in great demand as an artist and animator. A member of BAFTA, he has worked in film and television with credits including 'Space Jam', 'The Dumping Ground' and 'Doctor Who'!

The visit was arranged as part of a continuing commitment at Batley Grammar School to developing literacy skills in all its students. Authors working with children in this way contribute at many levels to student learning and development and it is always exciting to meet a famous author face-to-face. The day was very successful and enjoyed by everyone who took part.



Commemorating World War 1

The History Club have created a display, on the top corridor, focused around commemorating World War 1. This included details of the White Poppy Appeal, war memorials and modern peace organisations such as the United Nations. As part of the display, Year 9 students were offered the opportunity to complete a poppy with a message of remembrance on and also complete a war poem as part of the Literacy Focus Day. Great cross-curricular work Year 9!



Alcohol Awareness

On Friday 16 January, Collingwood Learning were welcomed to Batley Grammar School to perform a theatre show and workshop entitled "Smashed". The performance focused on alcohol awareness and aimed to give Year 7 and Year 8 students an insight into the dangers of alcoholism whilst conveying the important message of responsible drinking at a legal age.

The session consisted of a drama performance followed by a question and answer session. Our students were totally engaged and had lots of positive things to say about the quality of the performance. During the question and answer session, they made some very valid points and were most sensible in their approach to this serious subject. The group leader was really impressed with the students, commenting, 'the students were superb and conducted themselves so well in the Q&A afterwards, it was a complete joy to see.'

Dates to Remember

Friday 24 April
Sixth Form Prom

Monday 11 May
AS and A-Level Exams Begin

Wednesday 29 April
Sixth Form Sponsored Walk

Tuesday 12 May
GCSE Exams Begin

Wednesday 29 April to Friday 1 May
Year 6 Residential to Robinwood

Saturday 23 to Friday 29 May
Duke of Edinburgh Adventure Training

Monday 4 May
May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed

Monday 25 to Friday 29 May
Half Term Break

Thursday 7 May
CCF Annual Inspection
Year 8 Parents' Evening

Thursday 11 June
Primary Phase Picnic

Parents' Association Car Boot Sale – Last Saturday of every month at 8am

For more information please telephone (01924) 351863 or email pa@batleygrammar.co.uk.



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