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# Lent Newsletter

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## Easter Address from Mr Brailsford - Headteacher

This has been another amazing term here at National.

The first highlight I must mention are the incredible performances we saw back in February in the school show. Like many of the adults in attendance I was transported back to the 90's with songs from Bon Jovi, Backstreet Boys and N' Sync to name a few. What impressed me most were not only the performances on the night, but the commitment to ongoing rehearsals and weeks of practice from everyone involved. My Leadership Team can hear every song that is played in the Canon Williams Hall and we knew every lyric by the time opening night arrived! Yet again it was a privilege to see our amazing students working together and enjoying themselves.

This term we have also had three significant visits supporting further education. We had the Bletchley Park Computer Science visit, the Higher Education visit to Cambridge University and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) visit to Nottingham Trent University. All visits went extremely well and students enjoyed their experiences.

Easter tends to be the point in the year where many students in year 11 and 13 start to go through the gears in preparation for the summer exams. Mock exams have been completed and students will have received detailed feedback on how they have done and how to improve. Students will be planning a revision timetable and finding the right balance between studying and not. At this point students have had sessions on mental health, wellbeing, the importance of looking after themselves (self-care) and seeking support and advice from others. Good luck to all of our students over the next term – preparation is the key!

There are simply too many positives to mention. We had the Ghostbusters car arrive and take some students to the cinema. This was part of the ARC Cinema competition and we had a winner! All pictures are on our social media channels and in this newsletter. We have had students appear in the Nottingham Forest match programme for the game against Brighton and Hove Albion. They had participated in a celebratory event and the Community Challenge Cup (which Forest won). The event was a holistic experience, incorporating a VR session on the dangers of knife crime and a 'show racism the red card workshop' as well as the football competition.

This term has seen National change its approach to parental feedback. Rather than have a parent forum, we have moved to more regular, short, on-line surveys. This has been brilliant and the last two surveys have provided us with almost 400 views to analyse. I will write to parents after Easter with feedback from those surveys and also on any areas parents are highlighting. We will be considering how to improve in those areas and sharing that with you.

Thank you again for all of your ongoing support this term. From myself, our staff and governors we wish you a happy and Holy Easter.

**May the blessings of the risen Christ bring peace and joy to you this Easter.**

# 'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10

## Popstars: The Musical

Our academy production this year was Popstars: The 90's Musical, and was performed by our students over two nights on 7th and 8th February 2024.

'Let's Get Loud' about Popstars: The 90's Musical!! Full of bright colours, blue eyeshadow, band t-shirts, combat trousers and of course, some absolute 90's dancefloor bangers; it was 'Larger Than Life'. This show is Pop Idol meets Mean Girls – two rival bands, a boy band and a girl band, go head to head. They battle it out to get recognised by the drunk but well renowned music producer, Simon Austin. This is a story of revenge, as a boy, Mark, ('Torn' apart) tries to get his ex-girlfriend Shannon, back for breaking his 'Achy Breaky Heart' by entering the battle of the bands. It's Backstreet Boys vs Spice Girls. Most of all, this show is about friendship, the love of music, and 'Chasing Waterfalls' through high school, which got the audience singing and bopping along. 'You Gotta Be' pretty cool to remember all these tunes!

Popstars was truly inclusive and students of all ages from 11-17 were involved whether as an actor, dancer, singer, costume designer, make up artist, set maker or lighting operator; they really are 'Allstars'. We sold out over both nights and the money raised will be going towards buying a new, fancy speaker and some good quality headset mics. 'You Can't Touch This' or deny that this was something special.

Thank you to 'Everybody' that made this such a fun and successful production, the talented students, the dedicated staff and the supportive audience; we cannot wait for the next whole school production coming to you February 2025...to be announced 😊

'Bye Bye Bye' for now,

*Mrs Chambers and Mrs Case - Teachers of drama*



# World Book Day

Thursday 7th March was World Book Day, and this year, to celebrate, we ran a range of workshops for our students in the library throughout the week. On Monday Mrs Simpson ran a session on book journaling after school, and one on recreating book covers and blurbs of popular books at lunchtime. On Tuesday, Mrs Prestwood ran a session of book bingo at lunchtime and a murder mystery session after school. On Wednesday, Miss Hyde ran a creative writing session about creating great character groups, finally on Thursday, Miss Hornbuckle gave away a huge selection of books to our students throughout the day, for them to take home and keep.

Finally, of course, on the day itself, we had our usual staff dress up, encouraging some lively discussion with our students about the book characters we became and our reasons for choosing them. Highlights included the languages faculty who were all characters from *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, and humanities who were all different characters from *The Wizard of Oz*.

£1 World Book Day tokens were available from the library all week for students to collect, they can be used in exchange for a special £1 World Book Day book, or £1 off any book of their choice.

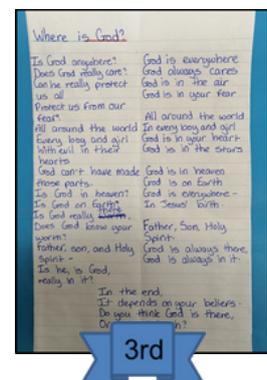
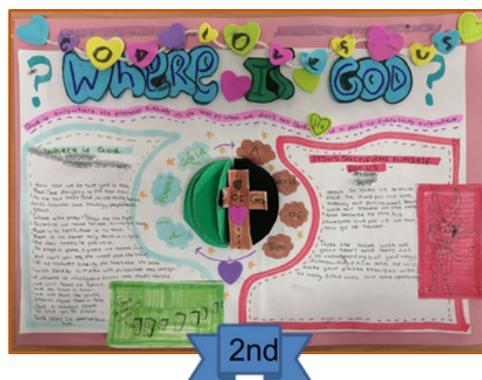
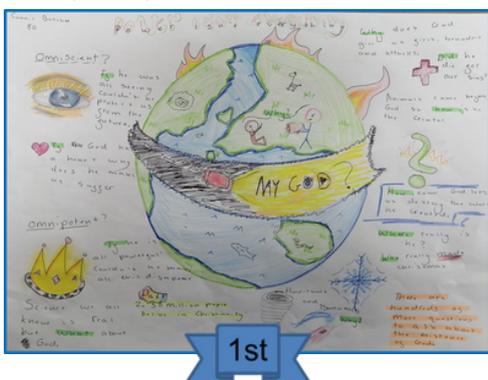
Mrs J Prestwood - LRC lead



## Where is God? - Year 8 Art Competition

In December, our year 8 students completed their unit of work on Where is God? This is a philosophical unit, looking at the reasons some people have given for their belief in God. We contrast this with challenges to belief such as the problem of evil and suffering and those presented by Science, for example The Big Bang and Evolution. At the end of the unit, students were set the challenge to create a piece of art work which demonstrated their belief in God. We had some excellent entries this year, with a variety of art styles such as sculptures and poetry, alongside paintings and drawings. Reverend Helen Chantry, the Vicar from St Mary's and Mrs Wall, our assistant headteacher judged the finalists from each year 8 group and the winners were all presented with love2shop vouchers in an assembly in January. Connie B was our winner, with Rosa B in second and Jessica P in 3rd. Their work will be on display as inspiration for year 7 when they complete the competition next year!

Mrs R Halfpenny - Head of social sciences



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# Education Sunday

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On Sunday 28 January I had the pleasure of attending the Education Sunday service at the Church of St Mary Magdalene in Hucknall. Our school was wonderfully represented by two of our ARCH ambassadors who read from the Bible clearly and confidently. Also, Anya, one of our Head Students, gave a short talk on what her Christian faith means to her. It was both encouraging and inspiring to hear her declaration of faith and how important the decision to accept God into her life has been to her. It was a great experience to be part of an all-age service involving schools from across the town celebrating the history of education in Hucknall.

*Mr T Surgay- Academy Chaplain*

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## Year 7 competition winner

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One of our year 7 students, Gemma, was lucky to win a competition run by the ARC cinema in Hucknall. On Friday 22nd March, Ecto-1 the car from the film Ghostbusters collected Gemma and her friend Olivia from school. Students from her class also got the opportunity to look around the car, before it took them off on a ride.



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## Prom shop

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At National Academy we believe it is important that all students in year 11 have the opportunity to experience and enjoy their prom, free from the worry about any cost implications this may have for parents and guardians.

With this in mind, we have a prom shop, stocked with a range of clothing and accessory items perfect for prom. If you are the parent or guardian of a year 11 student and would like to book a confidential appointment to see what is available in our prom shop, then please email: [marandajones@nationalacademy.org.uk](mailto:marandajones@nationalacademy.org.uk).

For students in year 11, attending the prom is about so much more than what they choose to wear, it is about celebrating the end of their academic studies at National Academy, looking to the future and being with friends.

*Mrs M Jones - Head of PACE and Associate Leadership Team*

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# Head of Year Highlights

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## Year 7

One of the exciting initiatives we were looking to build upon this term in year 7 was the integration of student-led activities during form time. We firmly believe in nurturing leadership skills and what better way to do so than by empowering our year 7 students to take charge. Each week, different students have been given the opportunity to lead their peers during form time activities, encouraging responsibility and confidence.

One of the highlights of the term undoubtedly came with our first interform activity – a 5-a-side football tournament! The atmosphere during the tournament was electric, with cheers and chants echoing across the sports hall. From strategic plays to impressive goals, each team gave their all, showcasing their talent and passion for the game. After an intense series of matches, it was 7B who emerged as the deserving champions, close behind were the formidable competitors of 7G, who fought valiantly securing the title of runners-up. It was a testament to the strong sense of community that thrives within our year 7 cohort.

There has been lots of enthusiastic participation of our students in various academic and extracurricular activities, resulting in an abundance of achievement points earned. We're thrilled to announce that 7E emerged as the frontrunners, earning the most achievement points throughout the term. Our top five individual achievement point earners are Faith P, Angel S, Finlay B, Suzie-May S, Tillie B and Amy D. These students have consistently demonstrated exceptional effort, enthusiasm, and excellence in their academic pursuits and extracurricular activities. As we look ahead to the rest of the term, we remain committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where every student has the opportunity to thrive and lead. We're excited to see what other achievements and milestones our year 7 students will accomplish in the coming weeks.

*Mr Beaver - Head of year 7*

## Year 8

Another positive term has passed for year 8 students with lots to celebrate.

This term the students with the most achievement points is Jimmy L with 168. In second place is Charles A with 158 and in third place is Georgia G with 158 points. This is a fantastic achievement for these students.

This term we continued to raise money through our tutor groups for our sponsored child in Ghana, Safura. There have been some incredible efforts from our students. This last week has also seen our Easter services in which all tutor groups brought together their contributions for the local food bank.

We would like to wish everyone a restful and safe Easter break and look forward to seeing everyone back at school on Monday 15th April.

*Mrs Hopkin and Mrs Bird - Head and assistant head of year 8*

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# Head of Year Highlights

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## Year 9

Year 9 have had a very positive term of an important academic year, where plenty has been achieved both in and out of the classroom. Being in school every day that it is open, is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and their wider development; and the average attendance for year 9 this term is 94.2% at the time of writing. Well done to 9B, leading the way with an average attendance of 95.3% this term, and the 109 year 9 students above our 97% target, with 65 students at 100%.

Every student in the year has received achievement points, collectively over 12,800 positive achievement points this term. 9F lead the way this term with over 2,000 positive achievement points. Individually, congratulations to Amy in 9D, Gracie in 9E, Joseph in 9A, Ava in 9E and Kalia in 9G for being our five most rewarded students in year 9 this term.

We have also made huge steps in the options process leading up to GCSE's, with every year 9 student having a careers interview as well as work in PD lessons to offer more support and guidance, the options evening in March, and concluding with options choices on 22nd March. We now look forward to an important last term in year 9, where key assessments will be used to determine tiers and sets in year 10, so I urge all year 9's to approach the next few weeks with commitment, determination and positivity.

Well done to all year 9's for each of their positives this term, and enjoy the Easter break.

*Mr Gilham and Mrs Newns - Head and assistant head of year 9*

## Year 10

Congratulations again to Liddeyia B, Marley H, Ella B, Erin H, Simone E, Grace P, Lauren P, and Amy H, who all have 100% attendance, more than 100 achievement points, have not been late to a single lesson and have not got a single debit, a fantastic example to all other students in year 10!

Our top three positive point earners for the half term are Isabelle T with 152, Kyra K with 118, and Lillie I and Robyn T both with 114 points, looking back at the same time last year this is significantly more credits being earnt, a fantastic effort!

Well done year 10, lets make final push into year 11 the best yet!

*Mr Mistry - Head of year 10*

## Year 11

Every year 11 should be proud of what they have achieved so far this year, especially our top five achievement point earners, Milly J, Macy C, Ivy B, Marcel P and Nathaniel B. 73 of our year 11 students have yet to earn a single behaviour point. I hope that year 11 will continue to focus as they enter their final few weeks of their time here at National Academy.

Wishing you a Happy Easter, hoping you will return refreshed and ready for the upcoming exam season.

*Mr Crossland - Assistant head of year 11*

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# News from HSFC

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## Trip to the NTU dark room

On Tuesday 6th February a group of year 12 and 13 students took a trip to Nottingham Trent University's darkroom. They were shown the historical processes of black and white film photography, as well as taking a short tour of the facilities. During the day they produced photograms and acetate prints of their digital portfolio. They were given the freedom to experiment and be creative. The photography lecturers were impressed with their creativity and enthusiasm for the work.



## Cambridge Visit

The higher education and year 12 students visited Peterhouse, Cambridge in February. This visit allowed students to tour the facilities, meet current students, attend study sessions in their preferred academic areas and gain insight and advice on making competitive applications to top universities including Oxford and Cambridge. The programme will continue throughout this academic year to support students in making the strongest UCAS applications possible in the autumn term.

## Collections for the food bank

During this half term, HSFC students have also been collecting donations for the local foodbank – this project saw 5 large boxes (and some bags) filled with groceries, hygiene products and baby products donated.

J Cliffman - Head of HSFC

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## Staff Update

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### Leavers

Mr Mahy is leaving us this term to take up the middle level leadership position of geography subject lead at Tibshelf Community School. Mr Mahy has been an outstanding teacher at The National Academy, providing stimulating lessons across key stage 3 – 5. Indeed, he has always impressed with his ability to integrate new technology into his lessons in a very meaningful and impactful way. It has been with genuine delight that he has shown me personally the latest APP he is using to better gauge student feedback. Furthermore, as a teacher he has always had our more disadvantaged students in mind, pioneering excellent resources for those who have below expectation reading skills. We are really sorry to see him leave, but obviously wish him the very best of luck in the next stage of his career.

### Arrivals

Ms Fu joined us as a Learning Support Assistant earlier in the term and we look forward to welcoming Mr J Wilson and Mr I Baggott, who join us immediately after the holiday. Mr Wilson will be replacing Mr Mahy as geography teacher, while Mr Baggott will be joining us as a music teacher and lead for music across the academy. They will be excellent additions to our school.

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# Dates to remember

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Monday 15th April 2024 - Return to school for all year groups

Wednesday 17th April 2024 - Year 8 AMP evening

Friday 3rd May 2024 - Year 8 HPV vaccine

**Monday 6th May 2024 - Bank Holiday - Academy closed**

Wednesday 8th May 2024 - Year 7 AMP evening

**Monday 27th May - Friday 31st May 2024 - Academy holiday**

Monday 3rd June 2024 - Year 10 trip to Bletchley Park

Wednesday 5th June 2024 - Year 12 parents' evening

Tuesday 25th June 2024 - Year 11 celebration service

Wednesday 26th June 2024 - Year 11 prom

Monday 1st July - Friday 5th July 2024 - Year 9 Germany trip

Wednesday 3rd July 2024 - Year 12 sixth form induction day

Monday 8th July and Tuesday 9th July 2024 - Year 10 ADT trip

Tuesday 9th July 2024 - PACE awards evening

Wednesday 10th July and Thursday 11th July 2024 - Year 6 welcome days

Sunday 14th July - Friday 19th July 2024 - Hagg Farm trip

Wednesday 17th July 2024 - Enrichment day

Thursday 18th July 2024 - Creativity and innovation day

Thursday 18th July 2024 - Pop up second hand uniform shop (4pm - 6pm) - further details to follow

Thursday 18th July 2024 - Year 9 theatre trip

Friday 19th July 2024 - Year 10 sports event

Monday 22nd July 2024 - Student achievement evening

Wednesday 24th July 2024 - ADT exhibition

Wednesday 24th July 2024 - KS3 sports day

Friday 26th July 2024 - Last day of term

Wednesday 4th September 2024 - Year 7 and year 12 return to school

Thursday 5th September 2024 - All year groups return

The National Church of England Academy  
Annesley Road | Hucknall | Nottinghamshire | NG15 7DB  
Phone: 0115 9635667  
Email: [adminoffice@nationalacademy.org.uk](mailto:adminoffice@nationalacademy.org.uk)  
[www.nationalacademy.org.uk](http://www.nationalacademy.org.uk)



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