

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2024

Welcome to our March Newsletter

This really has been a 'blink and you'll miss it' term! We have seldom experienced one so short, with only five weeks in each of the half-terms. School life is always busy and packed full of curricular and extra-curricular activity and we have done well to cram a huge amount into the shortest ever time period.

Most importantly, our Year 11 and Year 13 students have successfully completed their PPEs (Pre-Public Examinations) and now know what they need to do to ensure they go on to achieve even greater success in the public exams this summer. All Year 11 students were interviewed by members of the Senior Leadership Team or the Sixth Form Team and they talked to us with real maturity about PPEs that had gone well, those that had gone less well and what specific actions they were planning to take between now and the summer as a result.

Our response has been simple and clear- there is no silver bullet- it's now down to each student individually to put the necessary work in.

Everyone simply needs to work really hard in lessons and complete all Independent Learning Tasks- increasingly as the exams draw near, this will involve the completion of past papers and there really is no better way to prepare for the actual exams. Revision also needs to start- students are being very well supported with this.

More widely, our extra-curricular offer continues to grow, summer sports have kicked in, next year's pantomime rehearsals have started, our first full school Student Council meeting has taken place and our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors training, as part of The Diana Award has been set up.

The above is just a snapshot of the rich and varied experiences being offered to our students and it really is a privilege to be part of so many student-centred and exciting projects.

I wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable Easter break, doing the things you enjoy with your family and friends. We look forward to welcoming all students back to school and college on Tuesday 9th April 2024.

Best wishes,

Jenna Potter, Headteacher



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Year 12 Students at
The Brilliant Club



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Emmy qualifies
as referee



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Alex starts scaffolding
apprenticeship

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CREDIT

Areté
Learning Trust

ECO CLUB BIRDBOXES - THEY'RE UP IN TIME FOR NATIONAL NEST BOX WEEK!

Some time ago, Richmond School and Sixth Form College's brilliant Eco Club received a donation of nest boxes from Broadacres, a not for profit housing association based in Northallerton.

One of the three targets the school is aiming for as part of its Eco-Schools agenda is to increase biodiversity on the site. The goal was to situate the boxes around the site to attract more nesting birds, thereby increasing biodiversity.

The boxes, made by the Veterans Woodcraft charity in Newton Aycliffe, were painted by the students and the site team recently placed them around the school site in likely nest sites, ready for the spring.

Placing the nest boxes around the Richmond School site also coincides neatly with National Nest Box Week, an initiative that has been running since 1997. This year the week runs from February 14th until 21st.



For more information and to find out about how to encourage more birds to nest in your garden and local environment, go to this link:

<https://www.nestboxweek.com>

There is also good information at the BBC Countryfile link here:

<http://tinyurl.com/NestBoxWeek2024>

Note: We are aware that to maximise the chances of attracting birds, nest boxes should be as inconspicuous as possible. We discussed this after they had been painted and decided that brightly coloured nest boxes were better than no nest boxes. If you are going to put nest boxes in your garden, we would suggest that you follow the official advice and not paint them.

CHRISTMAS CARD DONATIONS GO TO A GREAT LOCAL CAUSE.

Last year's annual 'Alternative Christmas Card' charity collection, where Richmond School and Sixth Form College staff were encouraged to donate the money they would otherwise have spent on Christmas cards, raised £165 for local charity, Foundation Richmond.

Foundation Richmond is an organisation that works to provide a broad range of support for young people from the local area who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.

Recently, representatives from Foundation Richmond visited the school to thank staff for their donations and for a photo opportunity!

Becca Thackray, Housing Support Worker; Paul Grady, Housing Management Assistant and Jill Lundberg, Team Administrator along with a young representative from The Galleries, Richmond were joined by a number of Richmond School staff for the photo.

Foundation Richmond documented the visit on their Facebook page at this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/FoundationFBFeb24>

The article was also posted to Foundation's main website at this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/FoundationMainSite>

It has been a pleasure working with Foundation Richmond. Richmond School and Sixth Form College look forward to strengthening our links with this invaluable and worthwhile local cause.



'JUST THE JOB' SAY THANK YOU TO FUNDRAISING STUDENTS.

Steve Biggs, the manager of Richmond's Just the Job, a social enterprise charity providing a range of activities and services to people from the local area, visited the school recently.

The purpose of his visit was to thank Richmond School and Sixth Form College students for raising money to support the invaluable work Just the Job does in the local community.

Last year, the school's Eco Club organised a free dress day which raised £718 and the Year 6 disco in July raised £234. Student representatives from the Eco Club and from the team who organised the disco were invited to attend for a photo opportunity!

Steve spoke to the students explaining how the money had been used and the impact it has had and would have on the work Just the Job does. A highlight was the recent purchase of a large format scanner which will greatly add to the range of artwork the charity is able to do.

Steve also mentioned their 'Big Green Build' initiative, a pioneering project for the local area with the goal of building a new single site home for Just the Job incorporating solar panels, green roof, reed bed water filtration, timber frame construction and straw bale insulation. The project will incorporate specialist rooms for activities, fully accessible toilets with changing equipment, multi-use outdoor areas and a horticultural project. This will allow Just the Job to broaden its provision, supporting more individuals from the local community as well as increasing the opportunity for joint work with other local projects and schools.

It was fantastic to hear from Steve and to really get a feeling of the effect that fundraising for a local charity can have in the community. We look forward to working with Just the Job in the future, maintaining and expanding the strong links we already have with them.

You can find out more about Just the Job by going to this link:

<https://www.just-the-job.org.uk>



MARY WOOLLEY - RICHMOND SCHOOL BIDS FAREWELL AFTER 39 YEARS!

A door quietly closed on the service of one of Richmond School's most stalwart and long serving staff members recently. After 39 years Mary Woolley has decided to take a step back and make the most of her full time retirement.

Mary joined Richmond Lower School in 1985 in the key support role of Lunchtime Supervisor. Mrs. Potter, Headteacher, remembers Mary's support and kindness, both to the students and staff, when she became Assistant Head of Lower School in 1997.

Mary moved up to what was then Middle School to continue her work as Lunchtime Supervisor and more latterly as an invigilator, supporting the vital work done by the exams team.

Mary's retirement was marked by a small, informal gathering of staff where she was presented with flowers and one of Kirstie Thornton's amazing homemade cakes. Cake and tea were served as Mary shared some memories of her long service.

A big part of Mary's life are her son and his family, including four grandchildren. Mark, her son, runs a globally successful hairdressing business. He has been generous enough to visit Richmond School on a number of occasions to share his experience and expertise. When listening to Mary, it's very clear where Mark's generosity and kindness of spirit have come from.

Mary brought us up to date on the progress and successes of her grandchildren: Lyla works at Mark's hairdressing business and Harrison works for an advertising agency in London. Beck has fulfilled his ambitions and now works for Citibank, also in London. Finally, Roux is just in the process of picking her GCSE options and has a real love for baking and art. Those four have a fantastic Grandma!

Mary also spoke very fondly of Fran, Marks' wife, saying that she has always treated Mary and her husband John as 'mam and dad'. Fran has especially appreciated Mary's incisive ability to de-clutter her cupboards! Mary and John regularly travel down to Brighton to visit, a five to seven hour drive now the flights from Teesside have stopped. They plan to visit more frequently in the future now Mary has a bit more time.



We asked Mary what her plans were when she fully retired. She was engagingly non-specific while saying she would definitely stay busy. She's the type of person who you could never imagine just putting her feet up!

Mary mentioned yoga as a possibility. She said she had done it for years, but the instructor had stopped. She implied that as the years had progressed and the class members became more advanced in their years, the instructor gradually made the yoga less and less challenging. Mary said she might find it hard to start a new class with a new instructor now!

Many of the people in the room had clear memories of Lower School: the quality of the food, cooked by Gerry the chef was a particular memory, as were the routines involved in transporting staff and students between sites. Students used to sit cross legged on the floor in Lower School Hall awaiting the arrival of their teachers from Middle School, bussed down in a minibus - the 'linky'. Silence was called for, but rarely achieved!



Mary talked of her years as an invigilator, supporting the exams team. The 'Dream Team' photo shows Mary with six other invigilators from 2004, a time when teachers also invigilated exams. We asked Mary whether she ever stole Polo mints from students as she walked the exam hall - it was rumoured that certain teachers made a habit of it. Quite rightly, she was affronted by the question - Mary has maintained very high levels of professionalism all her working life - she made it very clear she would never have done such a thing!

It was a real privilege listening to Mary give us some memories and insights into her life at and outside school. She has been a fabulous supporter of Richmond School through the years and a pivotal part of the wider Richmond community and social scene - a role she intends to maintain and expand into her retirement! She has seemingly boundless energy and surely has some fantastic years ahead of her. We wish her and her family all the very best for the future. Thank you so much for the time you have spent with us, Mary.



The Dream Team 2004

SERVICE CHILDREN AWARDS - WE'VE BEEN NOMINATED!

Our readers may remember that recently we received this request from Angela Campbell, Service Children's Champion:

"Please could you encourage your school community to vote for the school and for your amazing Service Children's Advocate, Mr. Birdsall. He deserves to be nominated as he has always been so willing to work with me and to put support in place for this important group of learners."

The voting was for the inaugural Service Children Awards, which will shine a spotlight on the extraordinary achievements and contributions of Service Children and their dedicated supporters in North Yorkshire. Voting has now closed and the votes have been counted.

We were very pleased to receive news that we have been nominated in two categories:

Mr. Birdsall has been nominated in the 'Service Children's Advocate' category and Richmond School and Sixth Form College have been nominated in the 'Service Children Friendly' school category.

A judging panel will now decide a winner in each category. The winners will be announced very soon and receive an invitation to the award which will be held on April 25th at The Garden Rooms at Tennants, Leyburn.

We will be sharing more information about the awards as it becomes available - watch this space, and fingers crossed for the school and Mr. Birdsall in particular!



EMMY RAGGETT - FOOTBALL - PLAYER, REFEREE AND CAMPAIGNER FOR THE GIRLS' GAME.

Team sport is a significant part of the lives of many of Richmond School's students, both in PE lessons, practices and matches for school teams as well as participation in local, county and sometimes national squads.

Emmy Raggett, Year 10 student at Richmond School, is a fantastic example of this but she's taken it one step further by recently becoming the first female FA qualified football referee from Richmondshire. She's also applied to become a Barclays Game Changer - a high profile role that involves the support and promotion of girls' football in schools.

We caught up with Emmy recently to ask her about her footballing journey and why on earth someone would want to become a referee!

So, Emmy, go back to the beginning - where did your love of football start?

E: I've always loved sport but football started when I was about four or five and my grandad gave me a Norwich kit. I just wanted to play! I joined Richmond Town girls' team, but that soon folded because there were so few players. I played in a few boys' teams but didn't really enjoy it. Luckily Richmond Town started a girls' team again - they haven't stopped and have done really good things - I've played for them since then.

OK, what about your football now - what age group, what teams, what competitions?

E: I play the U17 team at Richmond Town - a year above my age. We play in the North Riding League, playing teams from Middlesbrough and the Sunderland area. We've been really successful, winning many cup and league trophies over the past few years. We're one of the best teams in the area, though there is a team called Boro Rangers. Most finals are us against them! I also play for Catterick Village Roses, who are a fairly new side but I am very excited to see where we go.



What about football at school? Football is very popular at Richmond School - how is girls' football doing?

E: It's definitely on its way up. We have teams across all the year groups, which is something we didn't have in the past. Numbers are still quite low sometimes, so we need to push more. How? I think we need to work that out - that's going to be part of my role as a Barclays Game Changer. I work quite closely with Ellen Atkinson, our Girls' Football Development Coordinator. One of the issues is that we have quite a wide range of abilities. Even in Year 7 some students have played for years and others are just starting out. If we had more players it would make things easier from a coaching point of view.

Now, on to refereeing. Who on earth would want to be a football referee?!

E: That's what everyone says!

Ever since I've watched football, especially Leeds matches with my dad, I've always noticed there aren't any female officials. Why? I'm quite aware of issues in the world, particularly when it comes to equal opportunities and this just made me want to be a ref - from the age of seven or eight. It's quite hard to get into - I've been on a waiting list for a long while..

So, you must have gained quite a bit of refereeing experience before the FA qualification you've recently obtained? How has the experience been?

E: Yes. I'm a ref for Richmond Town and referee games regularly - from U9 to U14s. I get comments from the players but mainly from the parents and coaches on the sidelines. It's understandable. Most of them have never seen a female ref, so maybe they would doubt me. But I really enjoy being a referee for Richmond Town. That's great! With the experience you've had and now this qualification.

What's your reaction to these comments - how do they make you feel?

E: Well, as the ref, I am in charge. The players are only showing themselves up making comments and if it goes too far I can send them off. Lots of teams are bringing in sanctions systems now. If anyone says anything rude or disrespectful, it's an automatic game ban. Those teams are much nicer to referee - Catterick Village is a good example.

So you can really feel the difference these sanction systems make?

E: Definitely. Players question the ref rather than blaming them. I can have a chat with players from these teams and explain my decisions, whereas with other teams it's more of a battle.



Ok, so let's move on to the course you did recently. Tell us a bit about that.

E: I was extremely nervous going into that room. I was the only girl and all the others were boys who were older than me, but not adults. It was intimidating but I really wanted this qualification and I just threw myself at it. Some people just sat at the back of the room and didn't get involved at all - I think I passed very well.

Excellent! That's exactly how to deal with a situation like that. Get yourself noticed!

How was the course structured - how long did it take?

E: There were three online modules which took ages, then this in-person training at Richmond School Pavillion which took two full days and an afternoon. There was some theory - the offside rule, how to card players properly, how to log fouls etc. Then there were the practical sessions - we spent almost half a day learning how to blow the whistle! We spent another half day learning all the different arm signals. Then there was assistant refereeing - I actually find that harder than refereeing, especially when calling offside - everyone looks at the assistant referee for an offside!

What about the assessment, how did that work?

E: It was continuous assessment, there wasn't an exam. The instructors had been observing us all the way through. We were told whether we'd passed at the end - not everyone did. At the end we all played a game and took it in turns to referee. It was all boys and they were all older than me, but I felt really confident. I really felt ready to go out and ref games after that!

So, what about the future - what are your plans? Mrs. Carruthers mentioned that you maybe hadn't had many really strong female role models - I guess that Rebecca Welch, the first female to referee a Premier League game might be one?

E: Yes, kind of, and I have thought about that. I'm not sure whether I want to take refereeing further, but if I do, I want to referee a Premier League game when I'm younger than she was!

I'd also like to get into coaching - there are very few female football coaches.

I'd like to give the women's game more of a push in school, like I mentioned before. But also we need to talk about it more and raise its profile. When the men's World Cup was on some of the games were shown in classes but when I asked if we could watch the Lioness's games at the Euros it was a no. In fact I didn't hear our victory mentioned at all!

What about the longer term future?

E: I'm not sure about a career in sport, though I have been given some opportunities in the last few weeks. I've started to train with Richmond Town Ladies first team and train with Hartlepool United. I am also hoping to train/play with Spennymoor in the summer pre-season. These are all semi-professional teams playing in the highest league in the north - Spennymoor are top of this league.

And away from sport - how's school going and what are your academic goals?

E: School's going really well. I would eventually like to go into engineering or sustainable engineering. I'm going to an architect's practice for my work experience so can hopefully learn something from that. I've also thought about becoming a pilot. I've been lucky enough to travel quite a bit and can only remember seeing a female pilot once or twice.

Lots of possibilities! Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us, Emmy. We wish you all the very best with your football, your refereeing, your role as a Barclays Game Changer and your studies and academic future. I'm sure we'll be talking to you again soon to report on more of your progress and success.



YEAR 7 NETBALL TEAM REACH SEMI FINALS IN HASTILY REARRANGED AREA TOURNAMENT.

The Year 7 netball team travelled to Thirsk recently, to play in the Hambleton and Richmondshire Area Netball Tournament. Mrs Carruthers, coach of the team, provided this report:

"Unfortunately the great British weather was not on our side and at the last minute the outdoor tournament was cancelled and all seven teams that had travelled were moved indoors into the single court sportshall. This meant that we were unable to play against all of the other schools but instead we were placed into one of two groups.

"We played against three other schools within our group, winning two games and losing one. This placed us as second in the group which meant we qualified for the semi finals. The Richmond Year 7 team played exceptionally throughout the tournament but unfortunately lost 2-1 in the semi final which ended their tournament.

"This squad of girls have trained weekly since September and are a delight to coach. They are a very talented group of students and despite it being the end of the netball season now, I look forward to what their Year 8 netball season will bring."

Back row, left to right:

Lucy Scullion, Evie Richardson, Poppy Penrose, Darcy Dearden, Freya Atkinson (captain)

Front row, left to right:

Rae Simpson, Clara Barnett, Lucy Charlton, Rosie Dent.



YEAR 8 FOOTBALL TEAM IN ANOTHER HIGH SCORING COUNTY CUP VICTORY

After their 10-0 victory against Ryedale earlier on in the year, the Year 8 football team were under pressure to perform against South Craven in the quarter finals of the County Cup recently.

Over to Mr. Westgate, team coach, for a match report:

"Richmond started the game well, applying great pressure with Henry Ward stealing the ball from the South Craven Centre back and chipping the goalkeeper with an excellent finish.

More pressure from Richmond led to a number of chances with Kyle Cleminson putting away a good cross in from Louie Petch.

After half time, more flowing football from Richmond led to another goal from Jake Murrell running through on goal.

South Craven came back fighting and created some good chances. Richmond's defence stood strong and were able to cope with the challenges they were presented with. Tom Simpson added another solo effort with some excellent skills.

Justin McGregor finished the game off with an high-class free kick with lobbed the keeper and nestled into the top corner to make it 5-0

Another brilliant performance from the Year 8 football team - through to the semi finals!"

Photo overleaf:

Top row, left to right:

Tom Simpson, Henry Ward, Nathan Collier, Will Anderson, Harrison Platts, Bertie Morris, Jake Wright, Justin McGregor, Kyle Cleminson, Louie Petch.

Bottom row, left to right:

Ethan Garside, Noah Lister, Jooles Robinson-Tate, Aaron Hutchinson, Joe Cox.



INDOOR TOURNAMENT GETS CRICKET SEASON UNDERWAY

Richmond School's U13 team saw some intensive action at an indoor tournament recently. Mr. Westgate, team coach, provides this report:

"The U13 indoor cricket team had a fantastic tournament recently, winning all five matches convincingly.

The first game against Queen Ethelburga's was probably the hardest, but some excellent bowling from Sam Fudali and Fred Lamb left us with a low total to chase down. Bertie Morris and Joe Brookes led the charge, both scoring well with the rest of the team chipping in to win comfortably.

The second game against Fulford was challenging. Some good bowling and fielding from Fulford kept our score down at the start but again the batting performance from the team shone through in the later overs managing to get to a good score. More great bowling from all the players including Pippa MacLelland gave us another win.

The third game against Northallerton was a comfortable win with Bertie Morris retiring quickly whilst batting and some good bowling from Jake Wright giving us another win.

The fourth game against Acklam Grange ended up being the hardest. Our bowling attack again was excellent with Justin McGregor and Lewis Pybus helping keep their total to 44.



Top row left to right:

Pippa MacLelland, Fred Lamb, Bertie Morris, Justin McGregor, Jake Wright, Will Anderson

Bottom row left to right:

Lewis Pybus, Joe Brookes, Sam Fudali, Tomas Pybus

Richmond may have been a little complacent! Opening the bowling with their Durham County cricketer, Acklam Grange took two early wickets which made the task difficult. Sam Fudali was solid and sensible with his batting, managing to retire, but more wickets meant he had to come back in late on to finish the job which he did excellently.

The last game against Macmillan Academy was Richmond's best performance. Again, more superb bowling left Richmond with a total of 55 to chase down. Bertie Morris, Joe Brookes and Jake Wright retired and the other batters all scored runs leading to 5 straight wins.

A fantastic team performance to become North Yorkshire winners and through to the Yorkshire finals at Headingley in March."

GIRLS' CRICKET THRIVING AT RICHMOND SCHOOL.

Richmond School's two girls' cricket teams have been competing indoors recently, with the U15 team achieving particular success. Watch this space for a report from Headingley as the U15 team play in the Lady Taverners Girls' Indoor Yorkshire Finals on Friday 15th March.

Reports from the U15 and U13 teams' recent competitions follow:

The U15 girls' cricket team are off to Headingley, the home of Yorkshire Cricket, for the second consecutive year after being crowned North Yorkshire Indoor Cricket Champions in the U15 Lady Taverners competition.

The team finished top of their group with three wins from three games. The first match was a closely contested game against Harrogate Grammar School with Richmond winning by 13 runs. In the second group game the team put in their best fielding performance, bowling Queen Ethelburga's out for 14 runs with Jorge Lumley taking three wickets in the same over and Richmond eventually winning by 50 runs.

In the final group game a good all round performance by the team secured their top position in the group by beating Unity City Academy by 20 runs.

The team progressed onto the semi-final against Ampleforth College, the winner of which would qualify to represent North Yorkshire in the next stage of the competition at Headingley. As expected it was a closely fought battle with captain Emmy Raggett playing a vital role as wicket keeper in this game, stumping out Ampleforth's top order batters and easing the pressure on our batting innings. Sophie White and Pippa MacLelland contributed with the bat by scoring some spectacular sixes to help Richmond beat Ampleforth by just three runs.

Richmond faced St Aidan's in the final and put in a fantastic performance under pressure for the North Yorkshire trophy. Richmond needed two runs to win from the remaining two balls. Isla Bastow scored the winning runs, hitting a four to win the North Yorkshire final with one ball to spare.



U15 Girls Team - Emmy Raggett (c), Sophie White (vc), Pippa MacLelland, Jorge Lumley, Isla Bastow, Isla Jenkinson, Lily-Mae Mccafferty, Lily-Ann Thwaite, Alice Botting.

Girls' cricket coach Miss Abbey said "I am extremely proud of the way our U15 team played in the tournament. We have new players coming into the squad who have picked up the game really quickly and are well supported by their teammates. It really was a true team effort with everyone in the squad contributing runs, wickets and taking catches in those big pressure moments. Emmy and Sophie, captain and vice captain respectively, really excel in their leadership roles to support the players and provide the strategic decisions that helped the team to succeed."

The team will play in the U15 Lady Taverners Girls Indoor Yorkshire Finals at Headingley on Friday 15 March.

North Yorkshire Cricket posted a report from the U15 Lady Taverners Regional Finals at this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/LadyTavernersU15>

The U13 girls cricket team finished fifth in North Yorkshire in their indoor cricket finals. This is the first time the team has played indoor cricket and they improved in every game as they progressed through the tournament. They narrowly lost to Queen Ethelburga's by just four runs in their penultimate game and in their final game against eventual winners Macmillan Academy the team put in their best bowling performance, only bowling one wide in all eight overs.

Miss Abbey said "I am so proud of our new young cricketers who have shown great promise in training and matches so far. The other teams in the North Yorkshire finals had already played and won their Area tournaments but this was the first time we have played. The whole team picked up the tactics and rules very quickly and have huge potential as the next future stars of girls' cricket at Richmond."



U13 Girls Team - Freya Atkinson (c), Ruby Ford, Tallulah Whent, Ava Hustwick, Eleanor Dinsdale, Darcie Dearden, Chloe Wilford, Grace Baleilekutu, Sarah Nolan.

RICHMOND SCHOOL UNSTOPPABLE ON THE RUGBY PITCH!

Richmond School's rugby teams have had a fantastic run of success in a variety of fixtures and tournaments recently. Mr. Moore, the teams' coach, shares highlights of some of the action:

"Earlier in the year a mixture of Year 10 and 11 students took part in an U16 10-a-side tournament. This is a fantastic squad with some real talent in both year groups. Richmond played some excellent competitive rugby and won the tournament.

The same team have also played two 15-a-side games against Risedale and SFX recently. Again, the team won both fixtures, with some big scores racked up by Richmond.

The Year 9 team took part in the Area 10s competition a short while ago. They performed brilliantly. Not only did they play some fantastic rugby, but there were a number of students who had never played a competitive game before. The way they grew, developed and learned from the experience was excellent to see.

The Year 7 team played their first competitive fixture for the school recently. We have a great squad to select players from and we'll try to give everyone a game in the near future - we have a number of fixtures coming up. The full sided game ended with another convincing win against local rivals Risedale.

The Area 7-a-side competition also took place recently, with teams from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 playing. I was refereeing other matches, so don't have details of the games but reports say that all teams conducted themselves brilliantly and gave a really good account of themselves and the school. It was a clean sweep with all year groups winning their respective competitions.

More fixtures follow for all boys teams and there are also plans for the girls to get their chance in a variety of upcoming competitions.

We are always on the lookout for students to join in and start playing rugby, whatever their experience level. The games we play are adapted based on students' playing experience in order to keep them safe - all are welcome!"



Back Row (Left to Right)

Jake Rogers, Jenson Pascoe, Ethan Walker, Teddy Brain, Josh Drought, Ben Phillips, Rori Fisher

Front Row (Left to Right)

Logan Hayden, Elliott Miller, Alex Shepherd, Harry Lewis, Jack Ford, Jamie Dent, Isaiah Delaidriti



Back Row (Left to Right)

Zach Stanley, Lucas Dolan, Alasdair McKechnie, Lewis Roberts-Austin, Jack Buttitta, Mataiasi Lewavakula, Andrew Ryde, Josh Smith, Simi Kawa, Ponipate Tagitaginimoce, Saiasi Tagi

Front Row (Left to Right)

Isaac Ulunasobu, Connor Farrelly, Jonny Moffatt, Ratu Naisau, Alfie Harris, Oli Rhodes

RICHMOND SCHOOL RUGBY PLAYERS CONTEST HARD-FOUGHT LOCAL DERBY.

Many Richmond School and Sixth Form College students don't just play sport in school, they also represent a wide variety of local clubs in all sorts of different sports, at many different levels.

Four Year 9 students play for Darlington RFC U14s: Elliot Miller (Captain), Rori Fisher, Harry Lewis and Logan Hayden. Five students play for the Darlington Mowden Park RFC U14 team: Josh Drought, Isaiah Delaidriti, Jensen Pascoe, Alex Shepherd and Jake Rogers. Nine of these players took to the pitch at Darlington Arena recently to contest the semi-final of the U14 County Shield. A big local derby, with passionate support from both sides.

The game started with a one minute silence to commemorate the recent passing of Tom Miller, long serving chairman of Darlington RFC and player Elliot's grandfather. A parent commented that it was fantastic to see players from both teams observing this solemn moment with such respect - 'lovely lads', she said.

The match was evenly balanced, especially at the start, before Harry Lewis opened the scoring just before half time to make it 14-0 to Darlington. Mowden's Josh Drought, man of the match, countered just after the restart to make it 14-7. A late Elliot Miller penalty sealed the win for Darlington: 17-7. Darlington now progress to the finals on April 14th.

It is fantastic to see the impact Richmond School rugby players are making in the local area. Three of Richmond School's U14 players have recently been selected for the Newcastle Falcons U14s Developing Player Pathway squad: Harry Lewis, Josh Drought and Elliot Miller - see photo. Watch this space for more information!

Both teams are always on the lookout to recruit players - all are welcome.

To find out more go to these links:

<https://tinyurl.com/DarlingtonRFCU14s>

<https://tinyurl.com/MowdenRFCU14s>



Photo: Lucy Hayward



RICHMOND SCHOOL DANCE STUDENTS INSPIRED BY PROFESSIONAL WORKSHOPS AND PERFORMANCE.



40 dance students in Years 9, 10 and 11 from Richmond School visited Leeds recently for a day of workshops delivered by professional dancers and choreographers, including a performance of the piece students are studying for their GCSE dance exams.

Mrs. Fox, Lead Teacher of Dance at Richmond School and Sixth Form College, organised the trip and provided this report:

"The day started with an exclusive workshop at Northern Ballet, headquarters of Phoenix Dance Theatre, one of the UK's leading contemporary dance companies. The workshop was led by two dance professionals, including Yasmin Patel, a current company dancer.

"In the 1.5 hour workshop our students took part in a fun technique class and then learned some choreography from Christopher Bruce's *Shadows*. This movement was taken directly from the repertoire which is performed by company dancers. All of our students tackled it head on and succeeded in performing it at the end - extremely impressive, particularly from our Year 9 students!

"The second part of the event was held at Carriageworks Theatre, a 20 minute walk across Leeds. This session consisted of an interactive lecture demonstration where students analysed the features of the work through tasks and discussion, led by schools' lead Rachel Thompson and four company dancers. As this is one of the professional dance works we study on the GCSE course, it was hugely insightful and allowed our students to develop a more in-depth knowledge and understanding of the piece. Our students were totally immersed in the experience and were all proactive in filling in their booklets with some even getting involved in discussions with the session leaders. Arlo Wheatley and Francesca Rouse were even brave enough to get up on stage to explore the costumes and set design used in the work and demonstrate in front of the audience. See photo below!

"The event ended with a live performance of the work (*Shadows* by Christopher Bruce) which was the cherry on the cake for our dancers who left the theatre feeling so excited and inspired! Every single student displayed immaculate behaviour throughout the day. They were enthusiastic and polite and it was a privilege to see them thriving in a professional dance environment."



THE BRILLIANT CLUB - YEAR 12 STUDENTS RISE TO THE CHALLENGE OF UNIVERSITY LEVEL PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

This year's Brilliant Club is being run by Gordon Duffy-McGhie, a PhD student from the University of Sunderland. The Brilliant Club has been running at Richmond School and Sixth Form College since 2017.

We recently sat down with Gordon to find out a bit more about The Brilliant Club and the impact it's having on students from Richmond Sixth Form College.

To start off with, we asked Gordon what The Brilliant Club involves and what it's designed to achieve:

G: The Brilliant Club is an initiative where PhD students come into schools to engage with students to upgrade their skills of discussion, academic analysis and written communication.

It's a charity that's been going for seven or eight years now and involves schools from across the region - Consett, Hartlepool, for example. A big focus of the initiative is raising aspirations - getting students to look beyond traditional local employment.

We moved on and asked what specific work Gordon was doing with Richmond Sixth Form College students:

G: PhD students are asked to produce a workbook covering seven weekly tutorials to include scenarios, case studies, etc. My area of interest is robot ethics and raising employability skills - that's the focus of my PhD: how do we get young people to elevate their thought processes to make them more employable and not be replaced by AI or a robot!

The workbook and the marking criteria are undergraduate level, so it takes a bit of time for students to realise the level of work they should be producing. At A-level, many students haven't come across the concept of citation yet - how many sources are they drawing from, are they using sources to validate arguments, are they using them to compare and contrast expert viewpoints? After only seven sessions, the mechanics of how to structure a 2000 word essay at undergraduate level when you're sixteen, seventeen years old - that's quite hard!





We talked about some of the differences between the approach taken by The Brilliant Club compared to A-level lessons and got into some of the specifics of the discussions the groups have had.

G: A lot of school work concerns knowledge accumulation, then recall at assessment, but the approach we take is slightly different. We're looking from a philosophical and ethical viewpoint about a person's view of the world.

Recently we had a discussion about AI decisions in driverless cars. For example if a driverless car is in a situation where there is a choice between colliding with a car full of cats and dogs or an elderly person, how should the car's algorithm be programmed? Many of the group argued that the elderly person should be saved at the expense of the animals, but some students spoke passionately about sentience - that the animals should be saved because a life is a life and there are more of them - it was quite a lively debate!

What's challenging is to stop being emotionally involved with the question and to apply objective analysis. It really helps when we look at exemplar work - what the differences are between essays that have scored a first or a 2:1 or 2:2.

We often come to the conclusion that the philosophical and ethical theories don't work - again, that's quite a challenge for the students - to find out that there's not actually a right and a wrong answer in these situations. That's the beauty of ethics - life is messy - sometimes both outcomes are unappealing!

Thanks to Gordon for giving us an insight into the work that The Brilliant Club does. It's excellent to hear that the academic progress and employability skills of our students are being stretched and challenged not just in their lessons and by in-school activities, but in all sorts of other ways - The Brilliant Club being a brilliant example!

To find out more about The Brilliant Club go to this link:

<https://thebrilliantclub.org>

AND NEXT YEAR'S PANTO WILL BE.....!

Earlier this week, Miss Manning, Lead Teacher of Drama and Theatre Studies, invited students to an after school 'Panto Reveal' session where students who were interested in being involved in next year's panto would find out what it was going to be.

Students gathered around the stage in the main hall of the Sixth Form College as Miss Manning gradually removed title by title from her presentation. Students held their breath, watched from between their fingers and hid behind their chairs. There was a collective gasp of excitement as the last title faded away leaving only one - Cinderella!

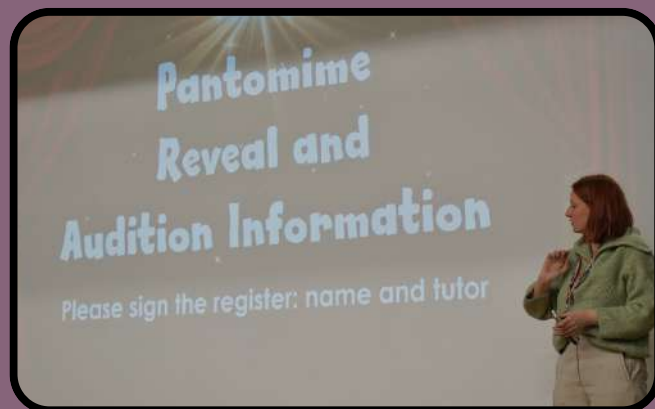
Note: The previous paragraph may have been embellished, but only a little!

Miss Manning then proceeded to reveal the cast list, whether the roles required singing ability and whether they were male or female specific - most of the roles are available to both boys and girls. She also gave details of the auditions, when they would be and information about the after school sessions to come.

After the fantastic success of this year's panto - The Wizard of Oz, it was great to witness the very beginning of the next one. Now begins the journey to what, we're sure, will be another resounding success. With Richmond School's students' array of dramatic, vocal and technical skills, it's virtually guaranteed!

There's a workshop on Monday 5th February where more details about the script, the dance routines and the vocal numbers will be given, then auditions follow on Monday and Tuesday 18th and 19th. All are welcome to attend on Monday 5th, even if you didn't attend the 'reveal' session.

We look forward to following the progress of Cinderella as the cast is picked, the lines are learned, the routines are practised and the production becomes stage ready - watch this space!



CINDERELLA - AUDITIONS ARE DONE - THE CAST IS ANNOUNCED!

Preparations for this year's panto really got started recently as auditions finished and difficult decisions about casting were made. We were invited along to the first full cast rehearsal to take the very first photo of the group of students who will be working closely together to produce what will undoubtedly be another fantastically successful production.

Miss Manning, Lead Teacher of Drama and Theatre Studies and director of the panto, said: "I have been so impressed, as I am every year, with the wealth of talent we have here at Richmond School and Sixth Form College.

"I had the pleasure of overseeing two evenings of impressive auditions, making the process of whittling down the main cast a real challenge! With the assistance of Keira Colley, my student assistant director, we eventually made our decisions and we couldn't be more pleased with the final cast list. We are also very excited to introduce understudies this year for each lead role. This will allow us to give some of our younger cast members the experience of preparing for a lead role (learning lines, choreography and lyrics) ready to go on stage should a cast member be unable to perform. After all, the show must go on!

We have since had our first rehearsal and have been blown away by the students' energy and enthusiasm for the production. We're going to have a ball!"

Watch this space for updates on progress, profiles of cast and crew members and opportunities to get involved!

RICHMOND SCHOOL STUDENTS ACHIEVE EXAM SUCCESS AT LOCAL DANCE ACADEMY

We were recently contacted by Louise from the brilliantly named Rhythm and Shoes Dance Academy in Richmond. She sent three photos of Richmond School students holding exam certificates they had recently been awarded.

She said: "All passed their exams with flying colours and we are so proud of them! I just thought I would send photos of the girls with their dance awards so that if you wish you can celebrate their achievements."

Thank you to Louise - we would love to celebrate their achievements!

Here are the students and the exams they passed:

India O'Neill, Year 10 - Ballet

Seren Fawcett, Year 7 - Tap Dancing

Lucy Tallantire, Year 7 and Erin Mullen, Year 8 - Tap and Contemporary Modern Jazz



WILL STEELE, PUPPETEER - A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIFE OF A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST.

As part of our almost regular series of 'Alumni and Friends' profiles, we were fortunate enough to spend some time with Will Steele recently. Will was a student at Richmond school from 1998 to 2005 and has had a fascinating journey from then to where he is now - a professional puppeteer.

At the start of his visit we toured the school site. Will's memory of the exact orientation of the old buildings, even down to remembering precisely where an old doorway had been situated, was uncannily photographic. It was a genuine privilege to hear Will's candid reminiscences - he clearly wasn't an easy student to teach!

Will is an intense, eloquent individual whose mind seems capable of holding on to many trains of thought at once. On more than one occasion during our wide ranging conversation, I was reminded of the traditional tortured artist, at conflict with their inner selves! It made for a fascinating afternoon.

Below are some of the highlights from our conversation, broadly following Will's journey through school, up to the present day.

Tell us about school - what are your abiding memories?

W:

I didn't enjoy school until I was about 14 - into my GCSEs. I remember trying to find out who my group of friends was, who I could function with. Once I'd worked that out I started to enjoy things a bit more.

Some of my teachers stand out. An English teacher in Year 7, for example - he had wild hair. I always loved English because I loved reading. In fact I used to skive lessons, not to go and swim in the river, but to read books!

I started to enjoy the social aspect of school from my GCSEs into my A levels and had more brilliant teachers - Mr. Hesleton. Strange, funny and very honest. You always knew he thought hard about any questions you asked. He never tried to hide behind the 'teacher persona'. That was really important to me.



Classics was great too - Mr. Brettell, Mrs. Byrom, but one of the big standout things for me was that we used to do our A-level drama lessons in the Georgian Theatre. Being outside the sometimes strangely sterile environment of school and to be steeped in the history of that place was liberating. The workshops and spaces I've worked in since have always been covered from floor to ceiling in stuff - like living in your own mind. Working in the Georgian, leaning against 400 year old beams, feeling the history of the place, just made it so much easier to feel and be creative.

And you also studied politics? During our tour you mentioned that you maybe weren't the easiest student in that context. In fact you mentioned the term 'firebrand'! You were outspoken and sparky and challenging - was that something you kept through your A Levels?

W:

Ha. I certainly made my views heard during those politics lessons!

I think when I'd been in the Sixth Form for a bit I knew who I was and so did the teaching staff. They knew that I might be loud and speak my mind and be a bit bizarre, but they knew I wouldn't cause major problems. They also knew that I was the person to choose if they wanted something read out loud dramatically. For example, in Classics we took it in turns reading sections of the Odyssey out loud as a class. People hated doing it. At some points the teacher just asked everyone whether they minded if I read the whole chapter. Nobody did and I loved it!

Another standout during Sixth Form was a play that we put on. *Marat / Sade* by Peter Weiss. It was incredibly weird and ambitious, but our drama teacher was determined to make it work - she even took us to Preston to see it. We performed it at the Georgian Theatre. Miss Demkiw was great. She thought the final A-level piece that I wrote and we performed was good enough to be seen more widely - she booked us in at the Harrogate Youth Theatre Awards - nothing to do with the A-level, she just decided to do it!



So, after A levels - what happened next? You got good results - UCAS, university?

W:
I applied to do English Language at Newcastle, but didn't get in. I went up to Newcastle anyway and got a job working full time in a bar. I looked at renting, but it was just impossible. I was earning £280 per week, rent for a room in a flat was going to be £600 per month. After travel, I was going to be working full time for £100 a month. Totally unsustainable.

I came back to Richmond at Christmas and got chatting to one of the technicians at the Georgian Theatre - Adrian. He was great - I basically asked if I could work for him and he just said yes. I ended up being his second for the rest of that year, until I saw that Northumbria had just started running a course called Drama and Scriptwriting. English Language was the smart move, but my original idea was to be a writer and write films - this course was perfect. I applied and got onto the course - it was run by a scriptwriter who'd written for *Eastenders* and done some big West End plays - he was good!

Sounds ideal. How was it, how did it go?

W:
Unfortunately for my lecturers I was as difficult there as I was here! As opinionated and challenging. One memory is at the end of the course discussing one of my written assessments. I was told I shouldn't keep using my opinions, but base my work on evidence and academic reading. I told them I was going to keep doing it my way, as this was a creative media course. They told me that I'd therefore continue to get poor marks. Fair enough! My practical work was always good, so it balanced out at a 2:1. I'd do better if I did the course now!

It was quite a mad time, in retrospect. We were young and making art. We were lunatics! Just a short time ago I was asked to visit Newcastle College by a lecturer to see some student work and it was crazy! Totally over the top, but that's the emotional reality for people of that age - emotional, angry, depressed. I was like that then. I actually wrote a piece around then that nearly got out on Radio 4. They liked the way it was written, but said it was just too sad. Looking back at the post-apocalyptic nightmare of the piece, I can't really blame them!

So, an eventful, formative time at university, ending up with a 2:1 in Drama and Scriptwriting. What happened next?

W:
Ok. To talk about what happened next, I have to mention one of the most important experiences of my life. During my first year one of my lecturers mentioned he was reading a book - *Improvisation and the Theatre* by Keith Johnstone. He said he thought we should read it. I remember buying it at Waterstones in Newcastle and starting to read it on the train home. As soon as I got home I went out into the garden and kept reading. I only stopped when I'd finished the book. It was an absolute revelation - for the first time in my life I was able to say: "I'm not a crazy person." The book deals with the human condition, but not in grand terms. In the context of learning how to improvise, the author explains how genuine divergent, child-like thinking disappears in adulthood as people try to fit into society. It was like therapy to me, but fun.



So, straight after university I got a job as a security guard. I'd worked as a doorman before - kicking people out of clubs and breaking up fights. Then I got a job with the Newcastle Metro - driving around at night locking up the stations after the last trains. During my last year at uni, Cormac Power, one of my lecturers, had emailed me telling me about a workshop in London on trance mask improvisation - one of the techniques in Keith Johnstone's book. I had to go. I did the course and had what I can only describe as a strange and mystical experience, but it informed my final year project - we made masks and taught this technique. This led to what happened next - I went to train at the Danish Institute of Improvisation.

It was incredibly intense and rewarding, but didn't lead to anything career-wise. At this time I started to realise what it takes to make a living from the arts. You need to be useful. You need a huge range of skills. As an actor, for example, you need to be able to improvise, you need clowning skills, you need to be able to play more than one instrument. You need to be easy to work with. If you're not, there are other people who are. And that's just if you want to perform. If you want to create something, you need to be able to produce - you need to be able to organise people and budgets, timelines and resources. You need to know how and where to apply for funding. If not, it's not going to happen. The problem is that most art isn't commercially successful.

What about puppetry - no mention of that so far, even though that's what you're doing now!

W:

Puppetry came from the masked improvisation that we were doing. It was related to mime and clowning - full body work - how you move. I always really enjoyed this aspect of the work and I found that I was able to do it subconsciously - I could find the right frame of mind and it would happen. Anyway, still in Denmark. We were watching this show on BBC 3 - Mongrels - very rude, very funny, done beautifully with big muppet style puppets. I absolutely loved it. It turns out that one of the puppeteers on the show - Iestyn Evans - was attending a mask course in London. I ended up going and hassling him for a job - I said I'd work for free for a month. He said two weeks. I tried to be useful, but probably wasn't. They gave me things to do to keep me occupied and I ended up making things - including puppets.

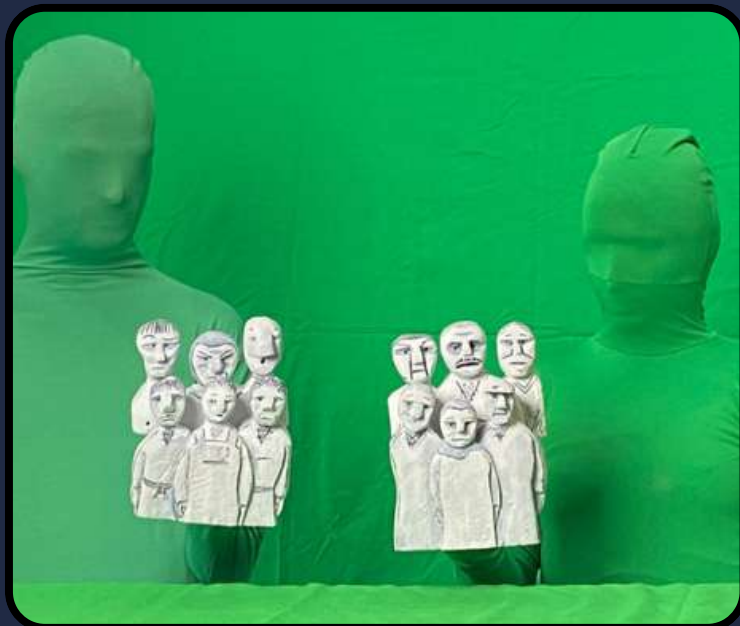
Around this time I went on a puppetry course run by Rene Baker. This was totally different from the puppetry I'd seen before - it was more like dance. I started becoming aware of different types of puppetry and the fact that the demand for puppetry was increasing, especially for working with young people. Young people relate to puppets better than they do to adults. They're much more prepared to open up to an inanimate object than they are to an adult human! Things started to coalesce. My puppetry, improvisation, practical making skills - the work I'd been doing on mental health and psychology. I started to know the answers to questions people asked me. Can you build a workshop? Yes. Can you run a course? Yes. Can you put on a large scale theatre show that sells out and needs more dates? Yes!



At this point I'd never thought about applying for funding from the Arts Council, but an amazing person, Natalie Querol, an Arts Council Relationship Manager, persuaded me to. I managed to get £5000 which paid for me to go to the Curious School of Puppetry for three months. After that I started teaching at Newcastle college and found I had a real gift for teaching puppetry. I could just do it and make it work for others, really quickly and efficiently.

As well as the teaching and many other ongoing projects, workshops, work with schools and young people, productions and performances, I was involved in setting up an open space project called Space Six. This was an affordable rehearsal space designed to support performing artists in the North East. There was just nothing like it in the area - we ran it for eight years.

I'm sure you could talk in depth and with great passion about the projects that you've been involved with over the years, but let's bring things up to date - what are you doing now, and plans for the future?



W:

Currently I'm the artistic director of Life and Limb puppets. We have a well regarded piece of puppetry and visual theatre that's just finished touring - Dragon. We describe it as 'An epic tale of a child coming to grips with authority, responsibility and the nature of their world.' The full show is over an hour long and it was seen by over 1000 people during the tour. We have plans to take Dragon out on tour again - we've invested a great deal of time and effort in the production and would love to see it on the road again. Our ongoing schools projects continue. I've applied for a residency in Sweden for three months which might or might not happen. We want to make some big walkabout puppets and get a bit more commercially viable. The Dragon show made a big impact with people who play computer games. They 'got it' much more than people without that experience. I'm exploring opportunities to expand the Dragon concept into a computer game - in fact I've already had some discussions with the company that made the Tails of Iron game, which shares quite a bit of the style of Dragon. I'm also looking at getting back into writing - I'm 37 and the live art game is hard work. It would be great to have some revenue from sales rather than chasing a show around the country!

I'm also thinking about buying a house. I don't quite know how I've managed to achieve this, actually. As a self employed independent performance artist I've somehow managed to save enough money for a deposit. This is a rare thing in my line of work!



Ok, thank you - some big plans there and so many possibilities! Finally, what about advice - what advice would you have to the sixth form version of yourself and the young people at Richmond School at the moment?

W:

Have Instagram, but never look at it. Apart from on Sundays, and only for inspiration.

Read Improvisation and the Theatre by Keith Johnstone.

Read Brené Brown's work - psychology / social science.

Read Ken Robinson's work - an innovator in arts education.

Read the Classics - the Stoics, Horace. So much to learn from these texts.

Watch TED talks - get into things. If you don't agree or don't understand, then find out more.

Learn how to make. Craft. You can't have art without craft.

Don't try to be perfect. Perfect is the enemy of good. Move forward always - failure is learning.

Don't compare yourself to others. The only person you should compare yourself to is you, yesterday.

If you want to create, your work will only be as interesting as you are. So go out there and experience interesting things.

Become interesting.

Thank you so much for your fascinating answers, Will. It's been an education, genuinely. Your journey has been intricate and involved and torturous at times, but you've managed to give us a real glimpse into the mind and life of an artist. I'm sure that many of our students will be fascinated and inspired by what you've said and the advice you have for them.

Below are some interesting and relevant links to some of Will's work, both past and present.

Space Six (no longer trading): www.space-six.org

Moving Parts Arts: <https://www.movingpartsarts.com>

Life and Limb Puppets: www.lifeandlimbpuppets.co.uk

Dragon trailer: <http://tinyurl.com/DragonTrailer23>

Dragon full show: <http://tinyurl.com/DragonFullShow>

ALUMNI PROFILE - BENJI APPLEBY - MECHANICAL ENGINEER.

We were pleased to catch up with Benji Appleby recently, a relatively contemporary alumnus of Richmond School and Sixth Form College. He was kind enough to do a Q+A for us after he'd visited the Sixth Form College to meet some of our current Year 13 students to share his experience of applying for and studying engineering at Durham University.

Briefly describe your time at school - what results did you get? Were there any particular subjects or teachers or trips or highlights that you remember?

B: I was at Richmond from 2012 to 2019. I was a quiet kid, but Richmond made me feel comfortable helping to foster my passion for science and maths.



I loved my time at Richmond with my physics teachers (particularly Mrs Harrison) who I saw had real passion for the subject and recognised my own passion.

A standout point was the A level physics trip to CERN in Geneva. It was fantastic to have the opportunity to see such an incredible place of research. On top of that, Richmond made sure I was able to go despite financial hardship - something I was very grateful for. My time at Richmond with such great teachers made me realise how much I truly loved learning.

I ended up with exam grades I was really proud of - As and A*s at GCSE (with an 8 in maths and 7s in English), plus A*AA at A-level - maths, physics and biology.

What did you do straight after school? How did you do? Any particular stand out moments or memories?

B: Straight after Richmond School, I went to Durham University to study Mechanical Engineering. Last year I graduated with a 2:1 as a Master of Science. I thoroughly enjoyed how to learn completely independently and all the trials and tribulations that science involves. How scientific research is not done in a day but is a continuous process of perseverance. Failing, learning from each failure, adapting your model and incrementally improving your understanding.

My main standout was my master's research and development project. Working with laser vibrometry to perform vibrational analysis on composite sandwich panels whilst developing a computational and theoretical model to predict the experimentally obtained results.

A real highlight of the course was the amount of learning involved each day in such a wide range of topics, from nuclear power plants to jet turbines. With each academic challenge I knew there was a lesson to learn which would only improve my understanding and lead to improvement and progress.

Another highlight was tutoring disadvantaged A level and GCSE students. Applying my knowledge and experience to help fellow students and to see their confidence build was great. It was nice to realise I knew what I was talking about after years of intensive studying where I felt confused and puzzled quite a lot of the time!

What did you do next? A description of your journey up until the present day.

B: I took some time off! I visited family in Spain - it felt nice to finally relax, disconnect and travel from May to September. There is more to life than academic studies!



What are you doing now? A bit of detail about your job and the roles and responsibilities it involves.

Since September 2023, I have been employed as a full time Mechanical Design Engineer at Electroimpact, a world leading company in the design and manufacturing of aerospace tooling and automation. I'm currently working on a project for the manufacturing assembly line for Airbus A320 aircraft wings. I'm finally implementing all my years of study but also realising how hard engineering is especially when trying to achieve microns level of accuracy.

The job has an interesting philosophy - you work on what you want, so days can vary significantly. For example, some days focus on metrology - measuring distances very accurately to achieve the aforementioned micron levels of tolerance. Other days might include designing components, evaluating stresses and strains, material costs, environmental impact, standards. Still others could include the assembly of mechanical components and pneumatic connections. It has been an incredible start to my career with plenty of learning.

Looking back, what advice would you have for our current students?

B: My main advice would be to stay curious, stay forever learning.

As a student I was often scared to raise my hand and ask questions, but often there are many others who want to ask as well. Teachers have so much knowledge in their field that is so under appreciated. And if you ask a question that even they can't answer you can research it and then another person has learned something new!

Thank you so much for the opportunity to connect again with Richmond School. I have much to owe to Richmond for what I have achieved to this point. Special thanks to Mrs Harrison for being such a great physics teacher and Ms Johnson in helping build my confidence in preparation for university.

Thank you to Benji for taking the time to give us an insight into his time after Richmond School and Sixth Form College and his fledgling career as a mechanical engineer. We wish him all the best as his career progresses and look forward to hearing from him in the future.

ALUMNI PROFILE: CHRIS LAYFIELD - SPORT, TRAVELLING, YOUTH WORK - WITH ART AS A COMMON THREAD.

We were fortunate enough to spend some time with Chris Layfield recently, a Richmond School and Sixth Form College student from 1996 until 2003. Once again, it is fascinating to look back and hear reminiscences of schooldays and track the journey an individual has taken from then to where they are now. Chris has maintained his links with Richmond School over the years, mostly through the work he has done through the Youth Centre and in school with many of our students. Art has been a common thread throughout his journey and he has recently started a business: Open Door Art, which he describes as "A Community Interest Company that aims to make art understandable, accessible and enjoyable for all."

We started by going back to Chris's time as a Richmond School student:

RS: Briefly describe your time at school - How was it, how did you do? Were there any particular subjects or teachers or trips or highlights that you remember?

C: I started at Richmond School in 1996, at the historic Lower School. You were in a year group all on your own - it was just the perfect start to get to know people from other primary schools. It was fantastic. I fondly remember inter-tutor football on the old tennis courts and signing up to the chess club so I could get an early lunch pass.



My school journey was rooted in sports and socialising even though, especially early on, I wasn't that outgoing. I was quite shy and I didn't like doing anything wrong. I hated being in trouble! My academic performance was pretty average. I wasn't a very good listener in lessons and enjoyed the practical subjects most - art, graphics, PE. Despite this, my time there was filled with fond memories - from football tours to Barcelona and Milan to a memorable history trip to Middleham Castle, where I lost both my shoes in the mud after running down the castle hill...sorry Mr Hughes.

I represented area and county sports teams throughout school with my greatest memory being a part of a successful footballing year group, led by the managerial mastermind that was Mr J Coldwell. RE teacher by day, Year 9 treble winning manager by night.

We had such a good year group, and we were all really close friends. That football team became our friendship group. That was who you hung out with at breaks and lunchtimes and who you sat with and who you gravitated to. Who you left school early to go and play football matches with. That became your core group of people - your friendship group for life.



My parents would always comment, "Thank God you're good at sport", as after every parents' evening they ever attended the same two sentences would come out of teachers' mouths: "Chris is very easily distracted" and "Chris has lots of potential but he doesn't apply himself."

I always loved extra curricular activities such as circus skills and sports, having massive respect for Mr Mollitt and Mr Coldwell for organising amazing football experiences for so many young people. They were certainly different times then - young teachers could just take teams abroad to play football without endless paperwork. These trips laid the foundation for my travelling later on as well as my love of seeking out new experiences and moving out of my comfort zone.

I will also be forever grateful to Mol (M.r Mollitt) and Snapey (Mr Snape) for the creation of Richmond Mavericks F.C. which allowed students to have somewhere to go after junior football. This was a huge part of my teenage and young adult years and I will forever 'bleed tangerine'. (If you know, you know).

Post-GCSEs, with no clue what I was going to do, I scraped into Sixth Form where I undertook A-Levels in Leisure & Recreation and P.E. I achieved C grades and enjoyed the social side of life even more. Football continued with Al Woodbridge as coach - he was amazing. He had us moving around the pitch without a ball - we thought it was madness, but more trophies and success followed in Year 13.

I found my confidence in the Sixth Form. I started feeling a bit more comfortable in myself and being a bit more outgoing and courageous in organising things like football competitions. I became a prefect! My girlfriend at the time put me forward without me knowing and I got voted in. I remember thinking: "What's happened here? How have I managed to do this?"



RS: What did you do straight after school? University, training, employment? How did you do? Any particular stand out moments or memories?

C: I had no idea where I wanted to go or or what I wanted to do. I tried lifeguarding and sports coaching but found my real passion working at Richmond Youth Centre, after I started there as a football coach. It was brilliant - engaging with young people and getting a feel for the youth club and the work they did. I really enjoyed being part of that community.

After a year of working in Richmond, I decided to go travelling to Australia. I think the term is 'I found myself', a cliché thing to say, but it was true. I grew up (a lot), I found independence, excitement and again enjoyed the social aspect of meeting new people and trying new and exciting life experiences. I originally went with a couple of friends from Richmond. We split our separate ways and they ended up coming back pretty early on. I stayed out there and that's where I really became independent. I realised who I was, realised that I could cope on my own through some tough times - no money, trying to work out where I get a job, that sort of thing.

I then travelled to Asia and around Europe and a few places in between before landing an apprenticeship as a Youth Worker at Richmond Youth Centre at the age of 21. Dawn from the Youth Centre had sent me an email in Australia saying there was an apprenticeship coming up. I applied from a hostel in the middle of the Outback! They called me for an interview and I flew back. I had a shave and bought a suit that was way too big for me. I turned up with a pierced eyebrow and long curly surfer dude hair. I got the job! I actually think that my life experiences up to then were part of it. I had lots to talk about and was good at relating to people.



RS: What did you do next? A description of your journey up until the present day.

While working at Richmond Youth Centre, the time felt right to continue my studies. I enrolled part-time at university and completed a four year degree in Youth & Community Studies. I realised my own academic journey was about finding my passion and studying what I loved - something I didn't know straight out of Sixth Form. I also rediscovered art during this time. I found that just doodling drawing for young people really ignited something in them. It gave me a tool to use to engage and connect. From there, art became more and more a part of my day to day work with young people.

As a youth worker, I worked with hundreds of young people across North Yorkshire as well as developing a charity in Southern India. This stemmed from a work placement at university. One of my travelling contacts in India worked with young people and he needed some help setting up a charity. I did the placement over there, then returned later when the Youth Centre gave me some leave of absence. We even took 14 Richmond School students out there - when I meet any of them it's always the first thing they talk about. It's one of my favourite places in the world - I'd go back in a heartbeat.

After I left the Youth Centre, I worked for the Teenage Cancer Trust at the Newcastle Freeman Hospital, working with teenagers with a cancer diagnosis. It was a brand new post for a non-clinical staff member to support patients socially and psychologically - to be that listening ear, someone to talk to, helping them to stay up to date with their schooling, their college, their education, their work.



Art became an even more important tool in my armoury at this time. We created groups in different hospitals for people to come and do art. We ran one to one art therapy sessions. We did big murals for the charity. We created big events like 'Find Your Sense of Tumour' - young people from around the country coming together for an arts festival to learn about different diagnoses and to meet people who were going through similar experiences.

During this time I completed a master's degree in Teenage & Young Adult Cancer care. However, having young children, the commute took its toll. This led to me taking a role at Connecting Youth Culture where I led on the development of youth art programmes, festivals and developed a tipi wedding company, a trading service which aimed to make the council money. We started with two tipis (at £14,000 each!), but things quickly snowballed. We developed bigger ideas, went to more events, more festivals, became more ambitious with the weddings we were doing.

After three successful years, the council decided to discontinue the tipi company. They auctioned it off with blind bids. We put a bid in, without even knowing whether anyone else had and suddenly we were the owners of a limited company. From there, we turned it into a successful and award winning wedding venture which has been my life for the past 10 years.



RS: What are you doing now? A bit of detail about your job and the roles and responsibilities it involves.

C: I was owner and director of the tipi wedding company until December 2023, when I decided to gamble, sell the company and transition fully into what I love: becoming a professional artist and opening Open Door Art, a community interest art company specialising in the development and delivery of arts facilitation. I now work with various communities, schools, and charities, delivering tailored art programs to a wide range of people from school groups to those tackling homelessness.



It wasn't started from nothing, because it's something I'd slowly embedded through the last couple of years in creating contacts and delivering arts workshops in schools. I knew there was demand out there for arts activities as well as a need for targeted curriculum based work.

I feel as though we've made a brilliant start - we're already incredibly busy and we've got so much more planned. I'm also doing some work with the Prince's Trust in Newcastle and continuing my work with the Teenage Cancer Trust. There's also some corporate art therapy and public engagement work.

Sounds as though you've got a fantastic future ahead! Looking back, what advice would you have for our current students?

I always say to the people I work with that art is about the process. It's about art, not about perfection. Life will always have its challenges (whether you're 15 or 40), but through them I've learned that in the toughest of times you often find the most unexpected opportunities, which often lead to the greatest achievements.

I advocate staying open to new experiences and opportunities, not being afraid to say yes, stepping out of your comfort zones, and most of all believing in the process—whether in art or life.

RS: Thank you so much to Chris for taking the time to give us an insight into his schooldays and his fascinating journey of art, youth work, business and travelling since then. We are already starting to work with Chris and Open Door Art and look forward to continuing and developing our relationship.

For more about Chris's most recent venture, go to this link:

<https://www.opendoorart.co.uk>

INSPIRING INCLUSIVITY

FOUNDATION RICHMOND PROFILE INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN.

In the run up to International Women's Day on Friday March 8th March, local charity Foundation Richmond selected a number of inspirational women from local communities for an 'Inspiring Inclusivity' initiative. Four of the women are alumni of Richmond School and Sixth Form College.

Foundation Richmond is an organisation that works to provide a broad range of support for young people from the local area who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. Jill Lundberg, Team Administrator for Foundation Richmond, shared profiles of the Richmond School alumni with us so we can raise the profile of Foundation Richmond, International Women's Day and of course, our amazing alumni!

PROFILE 1: ELLEN ATKINSON - AN AMAZING ROLE MODEL FOR GIRLS' FOOTBALL

Starting off our celebration of inspirational young women in our community, we are delighted to introduce Ellen Atkinson. A goalkeeper since she was four years old, a triple distinction star CTEC Sport student, coupled with bags of experience and devotion to football, Ellen is an amazing role model for girls' sport. As the Girls Football Development Coordinator at Richmond School and Sixth Form College, Ellen is highly regarded by colleagues for her dedication to sport and how she encourages and motivates younger students. Her football credentials are impressive. Ellen started playing for her local mixed team in Reeth, before joining girls' teams and moving to Bedale Bluebirds U13 and U16 squads, Darlington Spraire FC's U18 team and then becoming the first goalkeeper for Darlington Quakers.

Ellen said: "My role at school is to encourage and inspire girls to play football and to push them to try something new, allowing them to develop their football skills and their passion to play. As a footballer myself, it helps the girls to see that football is for anyone to play. Within my job, I organise football events and manage two girls' football teams at school. Fixtures are arranged with other schools, which lets the girls get used to playing as a team and enjoying themselves while getting the benefits of physical exercise.



"It is really rewarding to see more and more girls come to play football, regardless of their skill set or knowledge of the game. Getting girls into football at school age is important, especially when it continues to be a male-dominated sport. It allows them to realise that there are clubs and other teams out there for them to join and it helps them to make new friends and expand their experiences with other people.



"Being a semi-professional footballer, I came across a few barriers to get where I am today. Living in a dales' location made it difficult for me to find accessible football teams for girls that would support my growing passion for the sport. I had to travel up to 30 miles just to attend a training session for the team that I was playing for, due to the lack of girls' football teams in the local area. After this year of working for the school, I will have gained lots of life experience and learned new skills that will help me to progress into what I would like to do in the future. In September, I will be taking up my place at Teesside university to study Paramedic Practice. I have always wanted to help people from a young age, and when I was at sixth form college, I did some research on what I could do as a next step and found a course that really interested me. In the paramedic industry there are more males than females, making it a male-dominated sector. As someone who has been in football all my life, this was less of a barrier for me and motivated me even more to apply. It is important as women to always go for what you want whether that sector is male-dominated or not."

"My advice to women of all ages is not to be afraid of stepping outside of your comfort zone and to try something that is not immediately associated with females. Girls and ladies' football is not only a fantastic sport but is a fabulous way to develop team-building skills and make new friends that could last a lifetime. As a career, it is important that male-dominated sectors welcome more women and offer a more diverse workplace."

Jenna Potter, Headteacher at Richmond School and Sixth Form College, said: "Ellen has committed over 15 years to honing her goalkeeping and teamwork skills. I can't think of anyone better placed to inspire the next generation of female footballers and to encourage greater inclusion and diversity in this sport. Our students continue to benefit from Ellen's expertise and enthusiasm, and she has proven to be a valued member of staff who is highly respected by staff and students alike."

PROFILE 2: PIPPA RIDDELL - FLYING HIGH AND RAISING THE PROFILE OF WOMEN IN AVIATION

We are delighted to continue our celebration of inspirational women in our community. Today our spotlight is on Pippa Riddell, one of the UK's youngest female commercial helicopter pilots in a sector where fewer than 5% of pilots are women.

Flying is in Pippa's blood. Her grandpa was a commercial airline pilot, and 25-year-old Pippa considered several career options, including being an Observer in the Royal Navy, before embarking on her helicopter training.

To become a helicopter pilot demands a vast amount of studying, with exams on all aspects of flying including instrumentation, meteorology, air law and navigation. You must also fly at least 45 hours to first achieve a private pilot's licence and then a further 140 hours to become a qualified commercial helicopter pilot. The costs are immense so to help fund her training, from January 2020 Pippa spent two years working two jobs as a waitress at the Station Café in Richmond and as a cleaner at Together Travel, to save as much money as possible. In January 2022, she made the decision to train full time and was delighted to qualify and gain her 'flying wings' at the end of 2023.



Additional training for these licences, on top of the initial 185 hours, included multiple hours of night flying, both with an instructor and solo, 50 hours of flying in a simulator and 20 hours in a twin turbine helicopter. The flying has taken her over many counties in England and Wales, over London and along the South Coast where she got to take her family and friends up in the air with her. Simultaneously whilst flying to build hours and hone competencies to pass her skills tests, she was required to pass a total of 22 exams which took months of studying, attend 2 ground schools for the different helicopters and spend many days flying.

Following her achievements she recently got a job offer working for an offshore company up in Aberdeen. Her job will include taking crew to and from rigs and boats, picking up injured or stranded persons which can one day open doors into Air Ambulance and Search and Rescue.

Pippa, an alumna of Richmond School and Sixth Form College, said: "I am so proud to have qualified as a commercial helicopter pilot. At times, when I was working pretty much every day of every week, it seemed almost out of reach, but it shows that if you really set your mind to something and focus on the end goal then so much can be achieved. For anyone who feels their dream may never become a reality, then my advice would be to try their hardest to reach it, with determination and drive so much is possible.

"I hope that more women will consider career aspirations in the world of aviation, or in other professions that are often associated with male gender stereotypes. It can be daunting stepping into a male-dominated field, such as aviation, but little by little more women are succeeding and by encouraging more diversity and inclusivity it would be great to think that there is a greater representation of females."



PROFILE 3 - BARONESS HALE - EQUAL TO EVERYTHING



To continue our celebration of inspirational women, we are proud to introduce The Right Hon. The Baroness Hale of Richmond and all that she has done to promote women in the field of Law.

The former student and Headgirl at Richmond School, went on to become the first female president of the UK Supreme Court, the most senior judge in Britain. She called for more women and greater diversity in the top ranks of the judiciary and was quoted saying that she hoped her appointment would 'set a good example to those wonderful able young women who want to aspire to the top.'

Much of Baroness Hale's work is focused on women's rights. When she became a Law Lord in 2004, she created a coat of arms, with the motto "Omina Feminae Aequissimae - Women are equal to everything", and called for all judges to be "committed to the principle of equality for all".

Growing up in Scorton, she attended Richmond School for seven years and was subsequently the first girl from school to go to Cambridge and the first to read law. Following her graduation, she moved to Manchester to be a university teacher and qualified as a barrister. She went on to write a book about mental health law and her career developed, moving up the ranks from Assistant Recorder to Law Commissioner, to Family Commission Judge, becoming the first woman Law Lord and culminating in being appointed the first female president of the Supreme Court. For many years, Baroness Hale was the only woman in the Supreme Court but gradually things are changing and the diversity picture is improving with a greater representation of ethnic minorities and women. During a presentation to students at Richmond School, Baroness Hale said that it really matters that our judges are more diverse because they are deciding the fate of everybody in the community and it must not be a narrow, elite group from society that decides people's futures. She explained that fairness, justice and equality are three key values and it does not look professional if those administering the law are not reflecting these.

Baroness Hale released her autobiography 'Spider Woman' A life, by Lady Hale in 2021 – you can find out more about her book at this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/BaronessHale>

PROFILE 4 - CHARLOTTE PORTER - INSPIRING INCLUSION THROUGH DANCE



To bring our celebration of inspirational women to a close, we are delighted to celebrate the great work of Charlotte Porter, proprietor and teacher of a highly successful and award-winning dance school. She started her business in 2017, when she was just 24 and moved to her spacious and stunning premises at the Station, in Richmond, in January 2019.

Charlotte is bursting with enthusiasm, energy, and an enormous amount of community spirit. She is passionate about inclusivity and aims for everyone who wants to be involved in dance to be given the opportunity. She delivers a breadth of dance classes including tap, jazz, street dance, ballet, contemporary and musical theatre, leading to exams if desired. Her classes are inclusive across the generations, from as young as two through to seated dance classes for the elderly. Serving a Dales' community, Charlotte is also keen to ensure that children and people in more remote settings have the opportunity to experience dance and are not excluded due to their location.

Charlotte, who was brought up in Swaledale, one of the most northerly of the Yorkshire Dales, and a Richmond School and Sixth Form College alumna, said: "I opened the Charlotte Jacqueline School of Dance as a way of providing other children in rural areas the same chance I had to enjoy dance and musical theatre. I wanted to stay in the Dales but there weren't any jobs in the performing arts so I set up my business so I could secure my future in the place that I care for and love so much."

Charlotte added: "As a young woman, I encountered several challenges along the way, such as being told I was too young, too inexperienced, and not having the right type of business model. At times, this was wearing and made everything more difficult, but I rose to the challenge and seven years later, I have taken on the unit next door to my original premises which makes everything more spacious and allows for larger classes. One of my key values is that nobody should be excluded from dance, and I offer payment plans and a second-hand uniform store for additional support."

Charlotte is a great community champion and often volunteers her time to choreograph for local amateur dramatics and pantomimes. She is also a valued member of Swaledale Mountain Rescue and is one of the youngest in the organisation.

Charlotte's advice to young people on finding ways to be included in the community and to make new friendships or develop a hobby, is for them to seek out classes and groups locally. There are a host of activities and events happening in the Richmond area, from photography and running, to dancing, singing or writing, and there are also lots of volunteering opportunities where young people can support others and inspire inclusion. Richmond Library is the place to go as they have some great resources available to signpost to the many organisations and groups that are running in the area.

You can find out more about Charlotte's Dance School and the wide variety of classes available at this link:

www.cjschoolofdance.com



TWENTY EIGHT LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS HIT THE TARGET IN TWO DAY DODGEBALL FESTIVAL.

Richmond School Sports Partnership hosted a hugely popular two day Key Stage 2 dodgeball festival recently.

Four tournaments were run - a morning and afternoon session over two full days. Seventy (!) teams participated which gave opportunities for pupils in Years 3-6 to take part in this fast paced, high energy game.

The tournaments were officiated by students from Year 10 at Richmond School who were brilliant at reinforcing dodgeball's code of conduct that encourages players to show respect, honesty, fair play and integrity. The Key Stage 2 pupils were encouraged to demonstrate these qualities whilst having fun and being competitive.

Thank you Mrs. Carruthers and Miss Atkinson for organising the festival and to the Year 10 students for officiating.

Thanks also, of course, to the following schools for supporting the event and providing the players!

Aiskew, Leeming Bar, Askrigg, Bainbridge, Bedale, Brompton, Bolton, Cambrai, Carnagill, Colburn, Crakehall, Hawes, Hipswell, Hutton Rudby, Le Cateau, Leeming and Londonderry, Leyburn, Michael Syddall, Pickhill, RAF Leeming, Richmond Methodist, Richmond St Marys, Thornton Watlass, Trinity Academy Middleton Tyas, Trinity Academy Richmond, Wavell, West Burton.



PRIMARY SCHOOLS TRY OUT NEW SPORTS AT ARCHERY, KURLING AND BOCCIA FESTIVAL

Richmond School hosted a Year 5/6 Archery, Kurling and Boccia festival recently.

Nineteen local primary schools took part, providing many opportunities for their pupils to try these new and exciting sports.

The event was led by students from Year 9 and 10 at Richmond School. The leaders had to coach, encourage and officiate games to ensure the primary school pupils had a fun but competitive experience. Congratulations and thank you to all schools for participating:

Aiskew Leeming Bar, Askrigg, Bainbridge, Barton, Brompton, Carnagill, Colburn, Crakehall, Hackforth, Hawes, Hipswell, Hutton Rudby, Michael Syddall, Ravensworth, Richmond Methodist, Thornton Watlass, Wavell, West Burton.

Special mention to the winners:

1st place: Wavell and Ravensworth

2nd place: Barton

3rd place: Crakehall



EX-STUDENT SHOWS GREAT PROMISE AT SWALE SCAFFOLDING LTD.



Paul Ward, Managing Director of local firm Swale Scaffolding Ltd. and ex-student of Richmond School recently sent us some excellent news about another ex-student of Richmond School, Alex Walton. Over to Paul:

"The photo shows Lea Jones, one of our Senior Contracts Managers, presenting Alex Walton with his scaffolding tools ahead of him starting his scaffolding apprenticeship course in the next couple of weeks.

"Alex started working with us in October 2023 and from day one has really impressed everyone at Swale Scaffolding Ltd. In fact, only a few days ago a Site Manager went out of his way to report to our company how well Alex was working on his site demonstrating fantastic enthusiasm with his tasks, a good understanding of health and safety and a great work ethic.

"Since joining the Swale Scaffolding team over five months ago Alex has never been late for work or had an unauthorised day off. Alex is truly going from strength to strength under the tutelage of our apprenticeship scheme and is proving to be a great asset.

"We would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere thanks once again to all at Richmond School for providing our company with yet another outstanding candidate.

"Hopefully there will be more young people from Richmond School coming to Swale Scaffolding this summer."

Paul Ward and the team at Swale Scaffolding Ltd. have always been great supporters of Richmond School, as well as being long established local employers. As Paul mentions, a good number of Richmond School students have progressed onto apprenticeships at the company, with great success. Thank you to Paul and his team for giving Alex the support and skills he needs as he starts his career in scaffolding. Congratulations to Alex for making such a strong and positive start at the company - I'm sure he won't be the last Richmond School student they see!

Week beginning 5th February.



Vasemaca Waiwalu was nominated by Mr. Wilson who said: "I would like to nominate Vasemaca for the Headteacher's CREDIT Values Award for Engineering. Not only has she worked consistently hard in class throughout the year, but since she has finished manufacturing work ahead of many of the other students, she has been attending after school catch-up classes just so that she can help others out. This has not been restricted to her friendship group either, as she has also supported students that she does not know very well. I didn't even realise that she was doing this for a few weeks. There was no searching for praise, recognition or reward.

We have discussed the idea of her looking at career pathways leading into training young people in some field of Engineering in the future, as she has such a positive, but gently spoken, funny, calm, and humble way about her. She has demonstrated our school CREDIT values throughout, going so far above and beyond my expectations."

Week beginning 19th February.

Francesca Rouse was nominated by Mrs. Parks who said: "Francesca is an endlessly hardworking and diligent student, who is, without fail, engaged in lessons and her learning. She consistently demonstrates all of the school CREDIT values, and never more so than last week, when she sent me an email. To this email, she had attached copies of the revision 'fact files' that she had started making, and she wanted me to share them, in her words, with "students who perhaps don't have access to the history revision guides". The fact that Francesca is not only taking her own revision so seriously, but that she has time to think of her peers, and perhaps those less fortunate than her, is certainly an attribute to be celebrated. Clearly, Francesca is an excellent, independent, and determined student, keen to succeed for herself, and help others to do so along the way."





Week beginning 26th February

Josh was nominated by Mr Westgate who said: "This year Josh has been absolutely fantastic. He is currently on 348 Credits and is regularly the top performing Credit student in Year 8 at the end of the week and many times, the whole school. I regularly get compliments about how well Josh is doing and what a lovely young man he has become. He has matured and has an excellent attitude to learning in all subject areas and around school in general.

When new students have joined the school Josh has taken them under his wing to help and support them and help them find their feet. He has also been fantastic with another Year 8 student who has been really anxious about school. Josh again has looked after him and worked with him to support him getting into school more. It is great to see Josh developing into such a hard working, determined young man who is striving to succeed and become the best version of himself."

Week beginning 4th March

Dan Harding was nominated by Mrs Roberts who said: "I would like to nominate Dan for his continuous effort in German. Dan is a fantastic linguist and has made incredible progress since starting German in September. Not only does he show an interest in the language itself, he is also interested in the culture and languages and their benefits in general.

Dan demonstrates excellent independence by regularly doing German on DuoLingo at home. Whilst learning about super pets, I challenged Dan to go home and come up with two more infinitive phrases. He graciously accepted the challenge and within two minutes, told me he had already thought of two which he had remembered from DuoLingo. They were brilliant phrases, so I told him I wanted another two. Again, Dan just accepted this with a smile and look of determination. I look forward to hearing them in our next German lesson.

Dan is a model student with the most excellent attitude to learning. He constantly strives to improve and not only is Dan hard-working with an incredible thirst for learning, he is also a lovely young man and he is an absolute pleasure to teach. I look forward to seeing Dan's linguistic skills continue to develop."

