



NEWSLETTER - December 2018

(Paper copy available on request)

End of term:

Term will end for students at 1:00pm on Friday 21st December 2018.

Key dates for next half term:

- 7th January 2018 - return to school (10:30am start for students)
- 17th January 2019 - Year 11 Parents' Evening
- 24th January 2019 - Year 9 Parents' Evening
- 11th February 2019 - The Aspire Programme
- 14th March 2019 - Year 8 Parents' Evening and options drop-in
- 1st April 2019 - Year 11 Parents' Briefing

Staffing:

The staff below joined the academy during this term; they have already made a positive impact:

- Mrs C Swain, Assistant Headteacher - Curriculum, Assessment, and Raising Achievement
- Mrs S Jefferson, Assistant Headteacher - Behaviour, Personal Development, Admissions, and Student Leadership
- Mr A Veiga, IT Technician
- Mr D Firth, Senior IT Technician
- Mrs A Sahota, Finance Manager
- Miss L Woodward, Careers Advisor

We say "Goodbye" to several staff at the end of this term. The Academy would like to thank them on behalf of governors, staff and students for their commitment to Castle Hall, and to wish them all the best for the future:

- Miss K Bryan, Deputy Headteacher
- Mr M Still, Head of Mathematics
- Miss H Butler, English Teacher
- Mr T Eastaugh, Interim Headteacher

We are delighted to announce in 2019 we welcome:

- Mr P Brook, Headteacher
- Mr J Byrne, Teacher of English
- Mr W Sarwar, Teacher of Mathematics
- Mr J Lockwood, Senior Lead Practitioner in Mathematics
- Miss E Rankin, Assistant Headteacher - Mathematics

Keep up to date by:

- visiting the website www.castlehall.com and/or
- follow us on Twitter @Castle_Hall



New Headteacher Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am very excited to have been appointed as Headteacher at Castle Hall Academy from 1st January 2019. My vision is to improve achievement, develop character, and raise aspirations for the students of Castle Hall.

I am looking forward to working with the whole community as we strive for great success for all our young people. By working together, we can ensure that all students enjoy their time at school, make excellent progress, and leave us with the necessary skills and attitudes to lead successful and fulfilling lives.

I have visited the academy several times over this half term and have already met with many staff. I have also been part of recent staff interviews; I am pleased to report we have made some excellent staff appointments - Mr J Lockwood, Senior Lead in Mathematics and Miss E Rankin, Assistant Headteacher - Mathematics, they join us in April 2019.



I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Mr T Eastaugh who I have worked with closely this half term, to ensure a clear handover in leadership is in place.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Brook'.

Mr P Brook
Headteacher

Site & IT Improvements

Improvements are underway; we are pleased to report what has been happening over the last few weeks:

- External rebranding of Academy buildings has been completed.
- Re-marking of car park/entrance areas to improve site Health & Safety.
- Refurbishment of all corridor and stairwell spaces in the Science/Technology block to improve the teaching and learning environment.
- External decoration of all windows, doors and fascias which has improved the appearance of the Science/Technology block and protect Academy property.
- Complete upgrade of all mains electrical supplies throughout the building to improve performance across the Academy.
- External decoration of dining hall, kitchen and main entrance to enhance site appearance.
- Carry out significant tree maintenance work to improve site appearance and enhance the area for local residents.
- Redecorate the main hall and stage area to enhance the teaching & learning environment.
- Replacement of servers and migration to newer hardware which makes systems more reliable.
- Improvements to IT helpdesk/responsiveness.
- Intranet home page for staff and students.
- IT support from Impact and appointments of an IT Technician and Senior IT Technician.
- The Halifax Academy and Castle Hall Academy pool resources.

Spain Trip

In October we had the great pleasure of taking nearly 40 of our Year 9 and 10 students to Spain. We flew to Barcelona one early Monday morning and spent the following four days exploring all that this wonderful part of Cataluña has to offer.

As well as visiting Gaudi's amazing buildings, we walked through the streets of this multicultural city and experienced the sights and sounds of the bustling streets, markets and shops.

We practised our Spanish in local shops and were amazed by the still incomplete Sagrada Familia. We scared ourselves on the huge rides at Port Aventura and made sure we were covered in sun cream in the Spanish sun.

We ate typical Spanish food, played football together on the beach, had bowling competitions, ate pizzas, and had lots of fun during our week immersed in Spanish culture.

The students' behaviour both in the hotel and in the big bustling city was outstanding. The flight attendants on Jet2.com complemented our students, as did the other guests who were staying at our hotel. We were extremely proud of the students who came on the trip and sincerely hope that they enjoyed the trip and learnt as much from it as we did.

Mrs Spiers, Mrs Hannam, Mrs Birch, and Mr Twine.

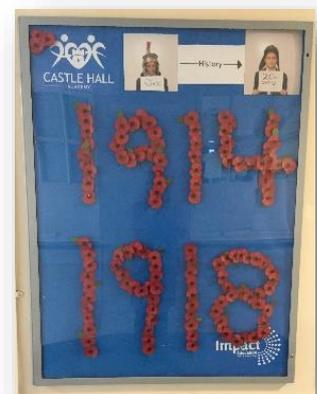


Remembrance Day



Remembrance Day assemblies were delivered to all year groups and the History department created a display. Students were helped to understand what Remembrance Day is, what happens on Remembrance Day, and why it is commemorated.

Staff and students supported the Royal British Legion by buying poppies and poppy related stationery.



Food Bank



In the face of increasing demand, food banks need to work harder than ever to maintain their stocks. Following our appeal to support the local community through the Batley Food Bank, staff and students did us proud, the contributions kept on coming... THANK YOU!



Awards Evening 2018



On Thursday 15th November, we held our Annual Awards Evening at Castle Hall Academy. The event was extremely successful and very well attended by our former Year 11 students and their parents. The evening was held to celebrate the achievements of students past and present and for former Year 11 students to formally receive their GCSE certificates.

The entertainment for the evening was provided by the Castle Hall Supersingers who performed some excellent musical interludes.

Congratulations to all the students who received certificates and awards and thank you to all students, parents, and staff who supported the event.

The Aspire Programme

Our students recently took part in one of our new Aspire Days, on 21st November 2018. Year groups were given the opportunity to engage in learning related to the world around them. Taking part in activities related to a range of subjects such as; questioning fake news, understanding drug addiction, and challenging stereotypes.

These days are designed to support our students in understanding the world around them. Tackling sensitive issues which are ever present in today's society, showing them how to successfully reason in situations surrounding these issues, and most importantly, being resilient to the challenges they present.

- Year 7 were able to explore the development of their body, learning about the changes they face in early adolescence, how to stay healthy and make the right choices with the food they eat.
- Year 8 were able to explore their future careers and develop techniques to deal with stereotyping and bullying in the workplace, as well as discuss scenarios related to mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- At the start of the day, Year 9 had the amazing opportunity to speak to the British Heart Foundation regarding physical wellbeing and cardiovascular disease prevention. They then went on to discuss their rights, and how to stand up for them.
- Managing the risks of Social Media, staying safe online, and how to stay safe in relationships was the theme of the day for Year 10.
- There were plenty of healthy debates for Year 11 as they looked at managing emotions, the dangers of cannabis, and the difficulty of identifying fake news in the media, and on social networks.

Engagement from the students was outstanding, with students and staff thoroughly enjoying a day away.

Positive Attitude to Learning



Students across all year groups were rewarded with a celebration lunch in recognition of their positive attitude to learning. These students had all A2L1s and A2L 2s following Grade Collection 1. There was a great atmosphere and students thoroughly enjoyed the pizza!



Year 11 Mock Examinations

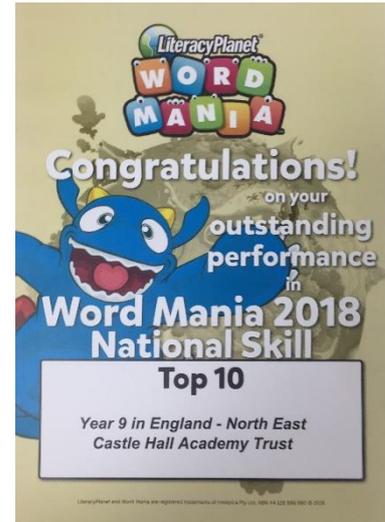
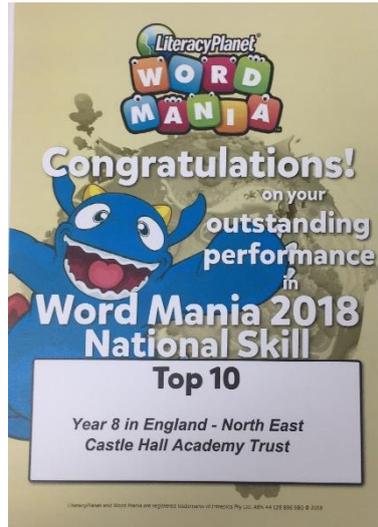
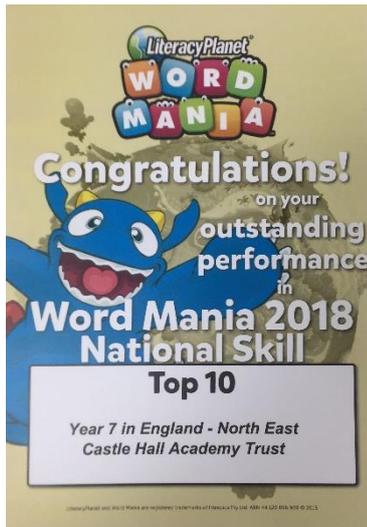
During the past two weeks, Year 11s have been taking their mock examinations. For some students this has meant they have had three exams on some days (dependent on their option choices). The majority of these exams have taken place in the Main Hall so as to create exact preparation for students in readiness for the summer examinations.

We understand that students are keen to access their results, so on Friday 21st December 2018, we will run a mock results day during period 1 where the students go to the Dining Room and get their results, as they will in August. In the past, we have found this to be of great value. It can be both confidence building and an opportunity to reflect on how things can be improved. We encourage students to ring home and share these results during period 1.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the students for their good behaviour during the mock examination period and encourage them to have a restful time over the holiday period. I hope they will return in January 2019 ready to work on achieving the best grades ever.



Word Mania



Word Mania has been shown to improve a variety of skills, including phonics, spelling, vocabulary, and word knowledge. Well done to our champion word builders!

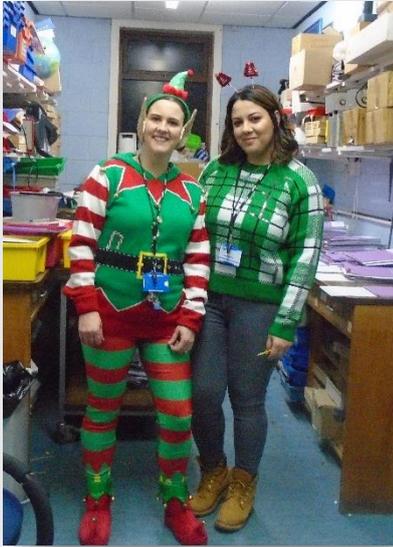
Orchestral Experience

Year 7 students thoroughly enjoyed the performance from Musica Kirklees Staff Orchestra. The enrichment event was wonderful and everyone got into the festive spirit. We hope the experience inspires some budding musicians.



Save the Children - Christmas Jumper Day

Well done to students and staff we raised a whopping £610.00 for Save the Children
[#whereheartsandmindsconnect](#)



End of Term Rewards

Well done to students who were invited to celebrate their excellent attendance and behaviour - chocolate, popcorn and drinks were on the menu along with Elf the movie.



Parental Engagement and Support

Parents and carers play a huge role in ensuring the success of their children. This is why we hope to continue to raise aspirations and achievement of the students at Castle Hall Academy through excellent parental engagement and support.

At Castle Hall Academy, we endeavour to work in partnership with parents and carers to support our students and ensure they achieve their full potential. We welcome feedback and are always keen to know what parents and carers think is working well and what they feel could be improved.

In order to support your child to get the very best outcomes, we ask that all our parents:

- Attend all parents' evenings and briefings
- Communicate at an early stage with your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year if you have any questions or concerns
- Avoid taking your child out of school for appointments and extended leave if at all possible (any absence has a huge impact upon student progress)
- Support our policies, particularly our BfL Policy and Attendance Policy
- Support your child to study effectively and regularly at home. This could include supporting them with homework, providing a quiet working space or purchasing revision guides.

We would also like our parents to support the Academy through attending productions and charity events, and supporting with the community links initiatives we organise.



Parking & Road Safety

Please take time during the Christmas break to reflect upon the daily routine of drop-off and pick-up at school.

In recent months, the situation on roads around Castle Hall has often been dangerous with students trying to cross roads which are extremely busy. We have also had complaints from local residents about dangerous driving/manoeuvring and illegal parking.



Head of Year Contact Details

To assist in contacting/requesting appointments with our Heads of Year, please find their e-mail addresses below:

Head of Year 7 - Mrs B Adams badams@castlehall.com
Head of Year 8 - Mrs L Bonham lbunham@castlehall.com
Head of Year 9 - Mr C Jackson cjackson@castlehall.com
Head of Year 10 - Mrs Z Murphy zmurphy@castlehall.com
Head of Year 11 - Miss R Haigh rhaigh@castlehall.com

Parents/Carers Contact Details

It is very important that we have up to date information for your child. We may need to contact you in case of an emergency or if we have to close the Academy due to unforeseen circumstances. Please remember to inform the Academy of any changes in your contact details i.e. home telephone, mobile, e-mail address, home address, etc.



Attendance and Punctuality

All our academy data shows that if students have at least a good level of attendance at Castle Hall they will make excellent academic progress. We therefore encourage all our students to strive for 100% attendance at school. Where this is not possible, due to illness or exceptional circumstances, we encourage all students to limit their time off school and to try and make this as brief a period of absence as possible. The Department for Education say that all students should have an attendance of at least 95%. Even this attendance percentage equates to a student being absent from school for half a day per week for the entire year! We would therefore appeal to all parents and carers to help students avoid unnecessary absence whenever possible. Please avoid taking holidays during term time and please only keep students off school when illness is severe enough to make school absence unavoidable.

As an Academy we strive to work with you to ensure that our students receive the most from the education we provide. To do this, we need our students to be here at Castle Hall Academy, on time and ready to learn.

To report student absence please contact:

Attendance Office

Reception

email

01924 523232

01924 520500

studentabsence@castlehall.com

Answerphone – please leave child's name, form & reason for absence

Uniform and Equipment

Uniform is worn by every student in accordance with the policy of the Governing Body and the Headteacher and staff ensure that uniform rules are followed. We believe every student is happy to be a member of the academy and is proud to wear the uniform.

Jewellery is not permitted, with the following exceptions:

- Students may wear one small plain silver/gold stud in the lobe of each ear. No other piercings are allowed;
- Watches may be worn.

Students may be asked to remove studs and watches in certain lessons in the interests of Health & Safety.

- No make-up is permitted.
- No excesses in hairstyle or colour.
- Outdoor clothes must not be worn in classrooms.
- All clothing should be clearly marked with the student's name (not just initials).

Shoes should be plain black sensible leather shoes (no logo), no heels, no boots, no canvas shoes, no trainer style shoes.



Equipment required every day - pen, pencil, ruler, and planner in an A4 size bag.