



LONGCROFT

— SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE —

NEWS LETTER



"I'd definitely do it again next year." — Anna

Friends prove they're up for a challenge!

This week are delighted to celebrate the exceptional contribution four Year 9 pupils make to our school and community.

Year 9 pupils Amy, Anna, Emily and Katie joined over 100 young people from across the region when they put on their walking boots and tackled the Humberside Police Night Challenge.

A total of 111 young people walked nearly 13 miles around the Brantingham Dales whilst tackling a number of thought-provoking challenges along the way.

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Anna said, "The Vicar of St Mary's Church gave us the information. It was our first time doing it and I'd definitely do it again next year." She added, "The leaders were really enthusiastic about it - especially Callum from the Army."

The immersive experience of Night Challenge is specifically designed for young people who may have a negative impression of the police and partner agencies, to build those positive relationships and educate them about the potential consequences of their behaviour and actions.

Participant focus on team work, communication, relationship building and leadership skills throughout the course of the walk." This year's event followed the story of Lucy and Ben and focused on the theme of sexting and the potential consequences involved, with challenges designed by our teams and partnering agencies to help highlight the dangers.

Youth Engagement Sergeant Nick Bunker said, "We have been delighted to work with our partners to deliver Night Challenge once again this year. It is a fantastic initiative that helps us interact with young people from all over the force area in a way that we wouldn't normally be able to."

"It provides an opportunity for young people to spend time with community safety partners in a challenging environment to help build confidence, self-esteem and life-skills."

"It is a challenge for all young people taking part – including the adults who supervise them on the route. Teams are able to talk to one another about a wide range of issues and this allows us to learn about what's important to them, whilst giving advice and information that will help them in the future."

The event is organised each year by the Community Safety Unit at Humberside Police who work with local organisations to bring the story together and make the event a continued success.

Community Engagement Coordinator Kerry Hirons said, "So many of our partners come together to make the event happen. We spend months planning how best to give young people the confidence to know they can achieve something that they wouldn't normally try."



"It was great seeing the teams go out into the night and come back happy, covered in mud and so proud of themselves and their team mates."

"All of those who have taken part this year will be invited to an awards ceremony in May to celebrate all their hard work and announce the winning teams."

Emily said, "We had to do CPR on a dummy. The storyline was that a girl had sent pictures to a boy then she took tablets and drank vodka."

Anna added, "It was a chance to do something we'd never done before. We had to put points on the map – I was in charge of the map."

Amy said, "The best part was learning different skills and completing challenges along the way."

Katie said, "It was great to spend time with my friends and to do something different."

The initiative is run in conjunction with Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, Yorkshire Ambulance Service, Humberside and Lincolnshire Orienteering Club, Defence School of Transport at Leconfield, Yorkshire 4X4 Response, Young People's Support Service, The Warren, Safer Roads Humber, Corner House and Yorkshire Lowland Search and Rescue, Raywell Scouts, Wilberforce Chambers in Hull, Stronger Together Team, East Riding Council Community Partnership Team.

Mr Baker said, "All four girls deserve tremendous praise. They are involved in a range of activities both in and outside school, including football where they represent Longcroft and also play for AFC Tickton Kingfishers and music. They are always willing to help out, such as by refereeing younger pupils' matches and are excellent role models. All four are a credit to their families and we are very proud of their achievement in completing this challenge."





Reward Totals

So far this term our pupils have been awarded the following rewards for acting with Great Heart, Thought and Vision:



Acts of Great

HEART

60,187

THOUGHT

268,386

VISION

242,098

GRAND

TOTAL:

570,671





Headteacher's Welcome

We have welcomed a number of visitors in to school over recent days, including as part of our National Careers Week events organised by Mr Coupe. In addition to the various activities in school, our Year 9 pupils visited Hull University for the day to learn more about higher education opportunities and associated routes in to employment and training.

It has been great to hear about the experiences pupils and students have enjoyed, and how in many cases, they have developed their thinking about the future. For some this has meant considering a career or qualification that they previously had little or no experience of. I have really enjoyed talking to young people about their experiences and reflections, and have been thoroughly impressed by their general maturity and confidence throughout.

A huge highlight this week has been the positive feedback we have received from various external partners and visitors about our young people. They have really demonstrated the Longcroft Standard both on site and when representing our school on trips/visits; having been consistently recognised for their conduct, engagement and contribution. I have tremendous pride in our school community and it is fabulous to hear our children celebrated so roundly by those that have been introduced to them - in many cases for the first time.

Last week saw a range of World Book Day activity. Pupils in Year 10 were treated to a visit from Chris Peck, an author who attended Longcroft as a pupil in the 1990s. Do read the full article enclosed to see some of the questions pupils asked as part of the session; and which provoked some great dialogue around reading and writing books amongst the group. We of course benefit at Longcroft from regular sessions with our author in residence and pupils are currently preparing for the visit to see her perform and be part of the 'First Story' conference at Cambridge University in the coming weeks. This edition of our newsletter celebrates some of the work submitted as part of World Book Day competitions and it has been fabulous to see the quality and volume of the responses. These include the First Story 100 words piece, which requires great imagination and a really precise and efficient use of language; as well as the artistic demands of our book cover design competition. It is great to see literature and the creative arts so vibrant within our school.

With the wintry weather set to continue this weekend, please do take care and enjoy the opportunity to catch up with all of the latest news at Longcroft.

Mr Perry
Headteacher



LOWER SCHOOL



Mr Worthington writes:

Throughout my career as a teacher, there have been many moments where I have been impressed with children's attitude to learning and their attitudes to life in general. Daily, I find myself feeling proud of our young people's achievements at school; for some children, this may be slowly getting to grips with a new skills and having a breakthrough moment, to showing genuine thoughtfulness and care for one another.

Four of our Year 9 children have taken part in a challenge to raise awareness of Mental Health. This involved an impressive walk, overnight in the dark, whilst completing challenges around a story of a young person struggling with their mental health. Emily, Katie, Amy and Anna, all adorned in headlamps with an accompanying torch set about their task with precision, showing courage and resilience throughout. The challenges were set by military personnel and the emergency services, who organised the event. The girls set off and completed their challenge in the pitch black, all tasks completed by 4:30am.

Emily said, "I enjoyed it, I found it tough in parts and we had to do a lot of independent navigating using the map. At one point we through we had lost our way but we got back on track." Amy explained that the challenge started at Raywell and involved making their way to the East Yorkshire village of Elloughton. "The challenges involved following the story of a girl who had fallen on tough times, the emergency services tasks were related to her story." I could tell from talking to the group how pleased they were that they were able to participate in the event; they have done a lot for the community in raising further awareness of the importance of understanding Mental Health.

Day-to-day, good mental health and wellbeing is essential for school children. It helps them to learn effectively, cope with day-to-day challenges, and develop into resilient young adults. There are a number of things that we as a school do to support the mental health and wellbeing of our children. Our Care & Achievement Coordinators are available to be contacted via the numbers at the end of this newsletter.



Another occasion where we could be proud of our pupils was on Tuesday this week when, as part of National Careers Week, we took over 130 Year 9 pupils to Hull University. This event was designed to give pupils an experience of what universities have to offer in a range of disciplines. Prior to the trip, the pupils were asked to choose what subjects they might be interested in from amongst a wide range of options. These covered such diverse areas of university education as the sciences, engineering, game-design, music, policing, healthcare, politics, education, midwifery, social work, art and music.



Pupils heard presentations on Higher Education, graduate careers and graduate progression.

Logan said, "I really enjoyed visiting the university and seeing the facilities." Millie enjoyed a presentation on Paramedic Science and explained, "We learned it's an operational department and that you have to do a lot of different training courses to be a paramedic."

On the day, pupils were able to visit the different departments in the university to learn about the various courses available, as well as meet both university staff and students. Once again, it was great to see the maturity and focus of our pupils as they visited a largely unfamiliar place. Collectively, they showed

that they understood the significance of the visit and the opportunity to listen to what the university could offer them.

Jack said, "I learned during the lecture about paramedics that you could be a nutritionist or a dietician and you learn and work in real-life scenarios."



Finally, our Lower School girls played two football matches against Hornsea. Mrs Henderson said, "It was a wet miserable night but the girls worked hard throughout their games." She added, "The Year 7 and 8 team had a hard battle. Martha worked hard midfield creating a lot of through balls and both Sienna and Martha had a number of good shots on goal but couldn't get them past the keeper. Annabel and Amy played well linking passes when heavily marked. The defence had a tough evening, Sarah and Sophia working hard to clear the ball, Evie again made some great saves. Well done to all and well played to Hornsea in their victory."

Mrs Henderson explained, "The Year 9 team dominated their match and played well as a whole team with solid passes and battling hard in tackles. Well done to Katie on her hat trick, with Evie and Anna also scoring on the evening. Well done to Longcroft's Year 9 team on winning their match." She added, "Thank you to Mr Deer who persevered through the rain to referee the Year 9 game and Year 10 pupil Millie Frank for giving her time to referee the Year 7 and 8 game."

Congratulations to everyone on a busy, positive week!

Mr Worthington
Head of Lower School



Congratulations to our Lower School pupils on the number of ClassCharts rewards they are receiving each week. The pupils who earned the most rewards last week are listed below.



Year 7

Neve Meagher
George Cheeseman
Lydia Chapman
Bradley Elvidge
Harry Dixon
Amelie Wharton
Holly Ruston
Lily Curtis
Oscar Gill
James Shiels

Year 8

Isabelle Roberts
Mason David
Lana Sheikh-Debes
Lexie Burke
Ellie Fordham
Ava Moore
Stan Kerridge
Lily Logan
Aidan Clayton
Poppy Cooper
Maisie Foster
Daisy Kelly

Year 9

Joel Hardy
Freya Kelly
Poppy Riby-French
Phoebe Stoney
Olivia Beaumont
Finn Bridgeman
Caitlan Skinner
Poppy Robinson
Joe Dawson
Katie Booth

Every Monday, a pupil who attended every single day in the previous week is chosen at random to receive a £5 receive an Amazon voucher.

Last week's winners were:

Year 7: Skye Norton
Year 8: Leon Hardy
Year 9: Lucy Coombe



UPPER SCHOOL



Mr Henderson writes:

Parents of Year 11 pupils have been invited this week to the 'Parents' and Pupils' Revision Evening' on Tuesday 14th March from 6-7pm. This evening will explain how we can all work together to support pupils to help create the progress and success we and our pupils strive for. It will outline the ways in which research has shown it is best for pupils to revise and the environment required for this. An outline of the final weeks at school will be given including details of the University of Hull Revision Conference on Monday 27th March.

Last week saw Year 11 pupils complete mock exams in Maths, English and Science. We have moved to a new format before the exams and pupils reacted positively to this change. Pupils met with us in the Theatre before each exam and were then given a five-minute instructional and motivational presentation by the head of subject. This included a reminder of which questions in each section to answer in the English paper, how to use the acronym CIDER to answer practical questions in Science and details in Maths such as always putting units with the answer. This allowed the pupils time to compose themselves and enter the exams focused on the job at hand.

This week has seen Year 11 pupils receive their 'Subject Revision Target Booklet' number 2. Pupils complete the booklet throughout the week, writing two specific targets based on gaps in their learning in each subject. These learning gaps have been found through their mocks, class assessments and teacher feedback. Pupils were very positive about the first booklet which was completed before half term. This booklet will also play a part in the revision conference pack ready for the trip to the University of Hull for Year 11 pupils on Monday 27th March – details to follow in a letter to parents and at the Parental Revision Evening.

Also looking ahead, on Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th March our Year 11 GCSE PE pupils will be taking part in their practical exams. This is an opportunity to impress their teachers and I am sure they will rise to the occasion.

Mr Henderson
Head of Upper School



YEAR 11 STAR OF THE WEEK

Each week a Year 11 pupil will be named as the Year 11 Star of the Week. This is an opportunity to recognise the hard work and efforts of a member of the year group — an Upper School pupil who makes a significant contribution to school life and through their endeavours provides an exceptional role model for both their peers and younger pupils.



Our Year 11 Star of the Week is an opportunity to recognize the hard work and efforts of one of the year group. This week our winner is Harry Carlyle-Smith.

Harry said, "It felt good to be chosen"

Mr Thomson said, "Harry is a hardworking pupil who is always polite. He's earned 1128 ClassCharts rewards since September — the most in Year 11. He also achieved excellent results in his Mock exams."

Mrs Ellis said, "Harry is a model pupil!"

Congratulations Harry!

Year 11 Revision achievements

Fortnightly GCSEPod Voucher winners

- Emma McDowall
- Sally Foster
- Layla Robinson
- Lucy Gunn
- Phoebe Wilson

Total SENECA Voucher winners

- Liam Harrison
- Katy Brown
- Liam Duffy

Year 10 Revision achievements

GCSEPod vouchers

- Lydia Fergusson
- Kripa Gurung





Congratulations to our Upper School pupils on the number of ClassCharts rewards they are receiving each week. The pupils who earned the most rewards last week are listed below.



Year 10

Lewis Kitchin	Ed Brock
Lydia Curley	Heidi Jackson
Alissia d'Andilly	Alesha Duncan-Dove
Summer Mulvana	Rhys Attwood
Samantha Thorpe	Imogen Capes

Year 11

Sally Foster	Zoe Murphy
Sophie Dyson	Lucy Bishop
Harvey Walters	Charlie Hodges
Katy Brown	Grace Howe
Archie Watters	Harry Carlyle-Smith

Congratulations Sally who topped the ClassChart points this week in Year 11.

Year 10 Over and Above Celebrations

Congratulations to the following pupils who have been identified by their teachers for outstanding performances. We will celebrate with them on Hot Chocolate Friday!

Grace Walker: 'Best Looking Book' – History teacher Mr Charlesworth said, "There are lots of good examples in this group but Grace's book is outstanding for quality, presentation and thoroughness."

Eloise McNamara and **Natasha Sharpe:** For helping with younger netball players. Mrs Holt

Mary Anderson: For an amazing UK Mathematics Trust Challenge result. Mrs Wilson

Lily Gray: Excellent attitude to learning.

Grace McKenzie: For consistent effort and excellence which was reflected last week with an extremely impressive 15/16 score in a tough assessment. Mr Pearson

Ryan Markham: Hard work and perseverance in Maths. Mrs Woolner

Every Monday, a pupil who attended every single day in the previous week is chosen at random to receive a £5 receive an Amazon voucher.

This week's Year 11 winner was Nicolie Hodgson – congratulations Nicolie!

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about NGL

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NGL (which stands for 'Not Gonna Lie') is an app through which users share a link to their Instagram story or Twitter account, inviting their followers to give anonymous feedback. The app includes some prewritten questions (such as 'if you could change anything about me, what would it be?'), plus the option to ask followers to simply 'send me anonymous messages'. All replies go into the user's NGL inbox, with the sender remaining anonymous – although subscribers to the app can receive hints about who each message was from.

ANONYMITY AND OVERSHARING

Anonymous messaging gives rise to the 'online disinhibition effect', which causes users to feel detached from their words and actions in the digital world. This can make young people in particular (as they tend to act more impulsively online) far more likely to disclose personal information on the internet, as well as making ill-advised confessions or revealing their fears and insecurities.

PROTECTION FOR BULLIES

Having their identity hidden makes bullies feel safe from repercussions, so anonymous chat sites are a major avenue for cyberbullying. NGL claims to use AI to filter out insulting terms, but our expert sent a range of such phrases (starting with 'cow' and 'ugly', and becoming progressively more offensive) to a 'dummy' account. All of these trial messages were delivered to the recipient's inbox.

COSTLY SUBSCRIPTIONS

NGL offers a subscription where – for a weekly fee – users can unlock hints about who's been messaging them, including the sender's approximate location and which device they used. Young people will naturally be extremely curious about who sent which message (especially if they have a lot of Instagram or Twitter followers) and may be unable to resist spending money to find out.

INFLATED ENGAGEMENT

1K

In June 2022, NGL had to revise its terms of service: informing users if a message was sent by the app's developers as opposed to genuine followers. It emerged that, previously, NGL's makers had attempted to boost engagement with the app (as well as enticing users to pay for subscriptions) by sending fake anonymous messages from bots. This update was rolled out very quietly by the team.

QUESTIONABLE SUPPORT

NGL does have a 'report this message' button for users to flag upsetting content. After sending a message, however, an automated reply arrives stating "... NGL is 100% anonymous and we have no way of knowing the identity of the user and would not be able to find out, even if we tried." This did not fill our expert with confidence that the app can address bad behaviour adequately.

AccIDENTAL Y GOING VIRAL

The messages on NGL itself are anonymous, but users can share these messages via their Instagram story or Twitter feed – enabling all their followers (or anyone, if their accounts are set to 'public') to see them. If a young person has disclosed something embarrassing or identifiable on NGL without realising, this information has the potential to be re-shared very quickly to a far wider audience.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DEALING WITH NEGATIVITY

Blocking another user on NGL will prevent them sending anonymous messages to your child in the short term – although a determined abuser could get around that obstacle simply by setting up a new Instagram account. If your child continually receives negative messages that upset them, it might be worth encouraging them to consider whether they really need to use the app at all.

BLOCK IN-APP PURCHASES

To avoid your child running up an eye-watering bill through an NGL subscription (or indeed any kind of costly in-app purchases), go into the settings on whatever devices they use to go online and either disable the ability to make purchases or protect that function with a password. If those options aren't available, it's prudent to ensure there aren't any payment methods linked to their account.

EXPLAIN ANONYMOUS APPS

We understand that a conversation with your child about the risks of anonymous messaging may seem difficult to initiate (especially if you aren't that comfortable with using social media yourself). It is vital, however, that young people understand that, for some people, having their identity obscured online can make them feel more powerful and less accountable for their actions.

THINK BEFORE SENDING

Regardless of whether a messaging app is anonymous or not, it's a good idea to regularly talk to your child about how it's wise to think through what they're sharing before they post it. Emphasise that nothing is truly private once it's online. If the post is something your child might hesitate to say to someone face to face, then it's probably not the sort of thing they should be writing online either.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



Mr Coupe writes:

In the past two weeks, our pupils have enjoyed a number of really exciting and important careers events. Firstly, we held the first of two half-day sessions for a group of female and non-binary pupils who might wish to pursue a career in science, technology, engineering or maths subjects.

Working with an organisation called Women into Manufacturing and Engineering, we were able to introduce 24 Year 10 pupils to a number of female employees working in these sectors. Alongside Carren, Cade, Tracey and Rachael from Howdens and Lorraine from Centrica Storage, the pupils reflected on their own values, skills and personalities, and explored careers in which they might be interested in the future. The response of the pupils was really fantastic and they approached the morning with enthusiasm and maturity. The feedback from pupils was really positive and our visitors said things such as '...the students – what a great bunch they are!' and '...it was a lovely bunch of students.' It was great to be able to feel so proud of our pupils as they portrayed the very best of our Longcroft values. For our next half-day session, we are hoping to be able to take the pupils to visit the Howdens factory so they can see for themselves what it might be like to work in an engineering firm.

Mary said, "It was really fun. I enjoyed finding out about the careers I could go into within STEM."





Another occasion where we could be proud of our pupils was on Tuesday this week when, as part of National Careers Week, we took over 130 Year 9 pupils to Hull University. This event was designed to give pupils an experience of what universities have to offer in a range of disciplines.

As well as the extent to which our pupils exemplify our Longcroft values, what these events serve to illustrate is how far we are developing and deepening our relationships with organisations, education institutions



and companies that support our work around further education, higher education and careers. We are developing a really strong relationship with the University of Hull, as well as with local colleges such as East Riding College and providers of technical and vocational qualifications such as Avant Skills Academy, who visited school this week to speak to Year 11 about apprenticeships. These relationships are increasingly being supported by our work with a growing number of local employers, such as Howdens, Centrica, Ansell, Siemens and Bostonair amongst others. In this regard, we are looking forward to the huge number of new relationships that we will develop through our Year 10 Work

Experience programme. So far, our pupils have successfully secured well over 100 work experience placements across the region and we are very excited about the huge range of employers that they will be working with. It is experiences and relationships like these that can bring meaning to education and inspire our pupils to future success, and when it comes to careers, our mantra really is 'reimagine what's possible'!

Mr A Coupe
Head of PSHE and Careers Education



TEACHING AND
LEARNING

Mr Taylor writes:

Continuing our look at the revision process this week we look at how we can help the process of remembering, and how we can help improve the retention of knowledge.

Improving Memory

We often blame our memory for poor academic performance ("I'm no good at remembering names / dates / rules / verbs / characteristics") when really we should be addressing our faulty input and storage system. There is a big difference between short-term and long-term memory. If we study a topic one night and can recall most of it the next morning, don't be fooled into thinking that you will be able to remember it accurately in two months' time.

If the goal is to improve your long-term memory, then the key to success is based on the efficiency of input (the 'mental filing system' we employ). Reducing the burden on the limited short-term memory, and channelling information into long-term storage, is based on the creation of patterns and the avoidance of randomness.

- » **'Chunking':** as the average person can only hold seven 'items' in short-term memory, grouping items together into 'chunks' can increase capacity. This is generally used for remembering numbers (think of how you remember phone numbers by grouping the seven digits into 2 or 3 chunks) but can be applied to other listings in various subjects.
- » **Repetition:** Studies indicate that 66% of material is forgotten within seven days if it is not reviewed or recited again by the student, and 88% is gone after six weeks. Don't make life harder for yourself - build in a brief daily and weekly review of material covered. It will save you having to re-learn material from scratch!



» **Application and association:** The best way to channel material to long-term memory is to organise it into meaningful associations. Link it to existing information and topics and create vivid personal examples which act as 'mental hooks' or 'cues' for recalling material in the future. Thus, new items are put in context. If you learn a new formula / verb / rule, try to put it into practice immediately with a relevant example.

» **Use of mnemonics:** these are various word games which can act as memory aids and which allow personalisation and creativity. Think of stalagmites (come down from the ceiling) and stalagmites (go up from the ground); the colours of the rainbow — **Roy G. Biv** ('Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain' to remember red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet); the seven characteristics of living organisms — **Mr. Grief** (Movement, Reproduction, Growth, Respiration, Irritability, Excretion, Feeding). You can devise many more of these to aid your personalised recall of items in your subjects.

Hopefully you may be able to reinforce some of these techniques at home as your child enters into their revision programme.

Have a good week

Mr Taylor

Head of Teaching and Practitioner Development





Memory Lane

This week we take a trip back to 2012 and feature Mrs Milson's
Year 11 tutor group – 11G



Back row:

Chris Pinder; Ryan Jessop;
Graham Wedgewood.

Second row:

Matthew Cheeseman; Kirsty Kirman;
Kira Vernon; Emma Barker;
Nathan Parkin; Sam Briggs;
Sebastian Hulse.

Third row:

Georgina Nicholson; Annie Stewart;
Aimee Frost; Jordan Jones; Callum Green;
Nathalie Prescott; Natalie Egerton.

Front row:

Luke Young; Sam Sharp; Joe Dewsbury;
Taylor Sorbie; Fay Briggs; Imogen Ryan;
Megan McCarthy.



LIBRARY NEWS



Ms Carvill writes:

Author Chris Speck Visits Longcroft to Mark World Book Day

Huge thanks to Chris Speck, who visited Longcroft Library last Friday to talk to 10EP2 as part of our World Book Day celebrations.



Some people are wonderful at telling stories; Chris is one of them. Not only can he write Young Adult page turners, but he can also tell a tall story too. Indeed, one of his rather spooky tall tales has become a local myth! But perhaps the less said about that the better.

Mrs Foster, Miss Shinkwin, and all 10EP2 have been sworn to secrecy!

Chris grew up in Cherry Burton and attended Longcroft School, of which he has many happy memories. After completing his A Levels, in the early 1990s, he read Philosophy at university.

In the last 5 years Chris has written 7 books. Lockdown helped, but clearly, he's a prolific writer. Pupils in 10EP2 asked him some questions:

"How long does it take you to write a book?"

"It depends. If I'm not working, about 3 months. If I am, then it's 5."

"When did you know you wanted to be a writer?"

"I don't recall exactly. I always wanted to be a writer. Any other career would be unfulfilling to me, but it can take time to gain the confidence. My degree didn't qualify me for anything specific, so I decided to become a guitar teacher at first, only to realise that most of my pupils were better guitarists than me."

Desperate to travel and see the world, Chris decided to become a TEFL teacher, spending 10 years abroad, working in Hungary, Denmark, Spain, and Papua New Guinea in the southwestern pacific, teaching the English language. It was a fabulous experience for a young man but on his return to England he decided to commit as much time as possible to writing.



"Why do you think you are so driven to write?"

"There is such power in stories and writing really helps me calm down. It's the best alternative to video games, and I'm never bored."

"How do you get ideas?"

"I run a lot and as I run, I think about the characters and plot. It's almost like writing a book in your head from start to finish. Then you take it to the editor's office, and he tells you off, and says you need to get rid of a whole chapter. Editing is difficult and sometimes you rewrite something again and again, but it's worth it."



"Do you read a lot?"

*"I am a great reader and that helps with ideas. I am very influenced by John Steinbeck. His novel *Canary Row* is my favourite book. I also love Ernest Hemingway's books. Neil Gaiman, the children's writer, is another favourite."*

Reading really helps you become a better writer. You are so lucky to have a library at Longcroft."

"Is it hard to get your work published?"

"Yes, it's difficult. You must be very persistent; that's why a lot of writers self-publish or publish on Amazon. I was very lucky because a friend of mine who had a top publishing job in London moved back to this area and set up a small publishing house. He's my agent and my friend."

*The first book that Chris had published, *The Beast*, tells the story of teenage Tony, who has just lost his dad to cancer. Tony fights out of the city of Hull boxing club and the book centres around the boxing world. It's a gripping tale, that touches on several issues, including domestic violence, grief and loss, and blends horror, mystery and social realism."*

"How did you research your novel *The Beast*?"

"I joined a boxing club. I trained for two years. My trainer inspired the character of Jacko. He didn't speak to me for two months until he knew I was taking things seriously. Boxing is full of emotion and passion. It's a great sport, but it's hard when you have to hit someone."

Chris clearly takes his research very seriously, which certainly adds authenticity to his novels. **The North Sea Tale**, which features another strong male teenage protagonist, is set in the cod wars in the 1970s, and **The Great Frost**, a tale of highwaymen, in the early 18th century.

A huge thank you to 10EP2 for their wonderful questions and to Chris for talking the time from his busy schedule to come to our Library and share his expertise. Pupils certainly enjoyed their talk by Chris:

"He was really funny and entertaining, and it was great to hear his journey to becoming a writer," said Lara de Kock.

"The talk was a great insight into the writing process," said Tilly Midgley.

"He really spoke well and was very relatable." Rosie Sissons

Copies of Chris's books are available in the school library. Do encourage your children to read them.



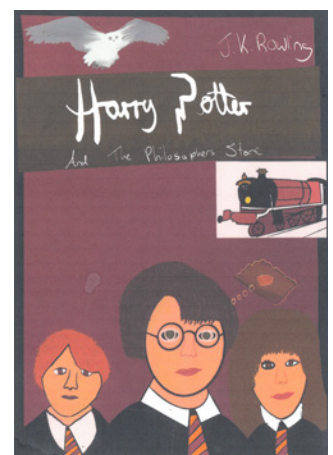
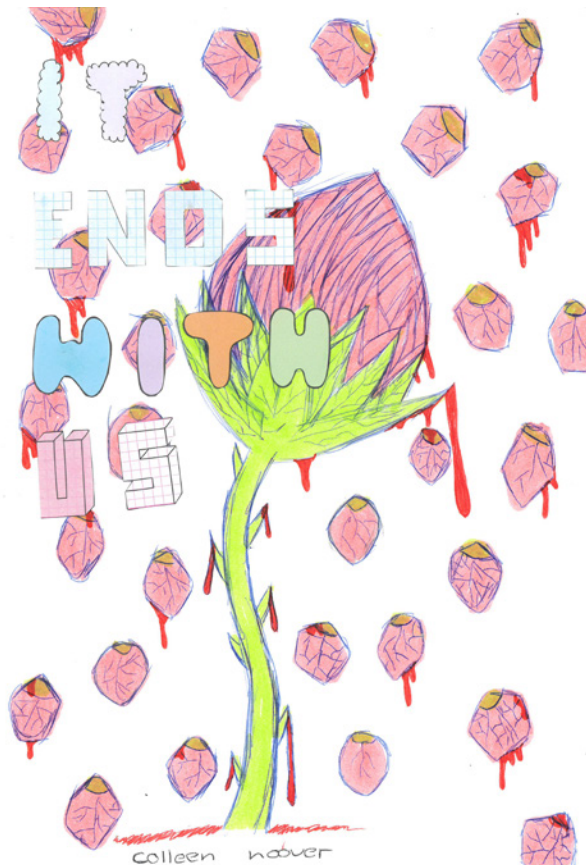
Competition Time

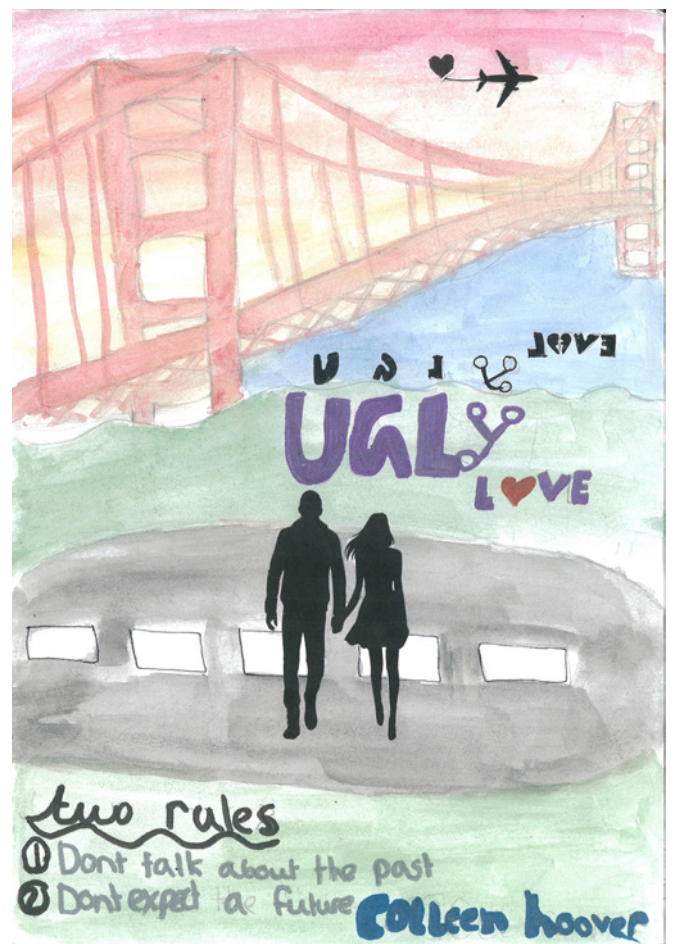
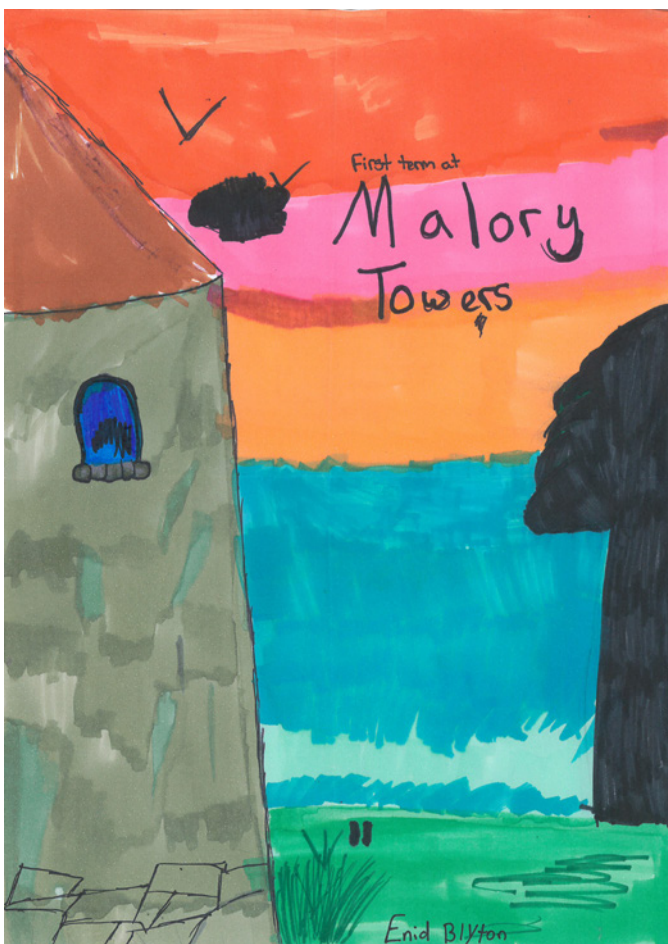
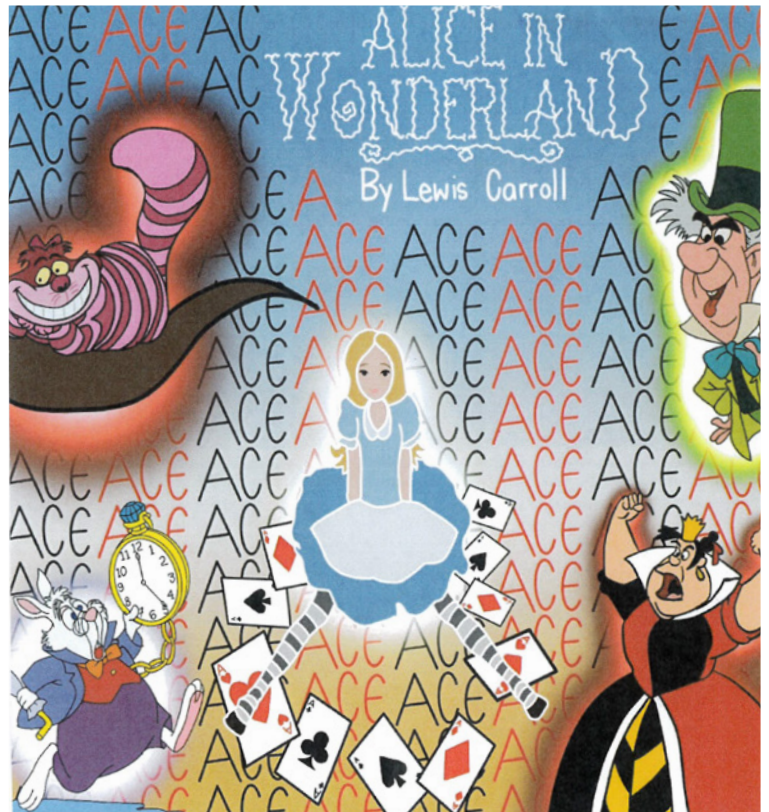
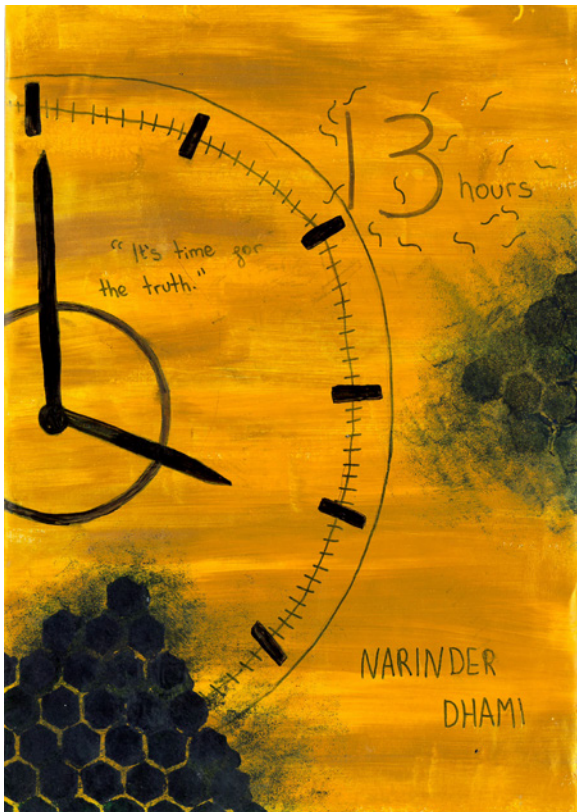
Well done to all our pupils and students who entered the World Book Day Library Quiz, the World Book Day Design a Book Cover Competition, and the First Story 100 Word Story Competition. It's heartening to see so many talented young people in our school.

World Book Day Design Covers Results

The Book Cover Design Competition was judged by two professional artists; both were thoroughly impressed by the standard of work they saw and commented on Isabelle Robert's 'brilliant use of colour', Ava Bryce's 'striking composition' which used metallic paint and print and smudging techniques, and Sam Al-Budri's 'original concept'. Special praise also went to Lily -Mae Tierney's Colleen Hoover's It Ends With Us cover design, and Poppy Cooper's atmospheric interpretation of Dreams Come to Life. The pupils listed above will all receive ClassCharts.

The overall winner of the competition is Emma Chow in 9EDN. Her design for Death is the Only Ending for Villains, based on a Korean web novel, is brilliantly executed. Well done, Emma. Her prizes will be awarded in assembly.







The 100 Word Story Competition Results

Thank you to all those pupils and students who entered the 100 Word First Story Competition. We had some exceptional entries. Special mentions go to Lydia Chapman for her story *'Homeless Girl'*, Patrick Marnham for *'The Star'*, Muireann Kennedy for *'The News'*, Alissia d'Andilly for *'The Final Curtain'*, and Sienna Rasen for *'The Broken Record Player'*. All these pupils will be receiving ClassCharts.

We are only allowed to select three winning stories to go forward to the National First Story Competition. Congratulations to our three winners. Inhouse prizes will be handed out in assembly and we look forward to the national results in April. Well done, Sam, Orlaith, & Sally.

The City by Sam Smedley 9EDN

Olive salad, every day. Blindly eaten with limp dead strokes, withered with pale bruises, and crimson gashes. Struggling, trying to limp forwards, destroyed legs lazily planted. The hotel door opens. Last coppers gone, not a penny, and a singular train ride away. Clear tears, against travel worn cheeks. The abrupt ending. Hung upright, yet bowed, hoarse eyes dart desperately across for help. Hollow, wet worn, decrepit. A final limp up the stairs, planted on an abandoned bridge. Eyes closed, crusty skin revealed, shoulders relaxed, an insignificant plop echoes in the treacherous chasm of the city, dissipated coldly into the night.

The Journey by Orlaith Brown 9EDN

The tatty suitcase clunked on the wooden floor. The phone pinged. "Salut! Have you got it? Has it arrived?" I glanced at the suitcase. "Keep it safe." Passports rattled. "Prochaine, Bordeaux." The ticket collector announced. My fatigue came back, eyes drifted. I wish they hadn't. My eyes opened- plumes of cheap wine filled the carriage. It was gone. The suitcase. It was gone. What should I do? He's going to kill me, what should I do? Suddenly, the ticket collector announced:

"Evacuate. There is a bomb on this train. Evacuate."

Evacuate. Tears rolled. Evacuate. Cheeks stained. Evacuate. I'm dead. S'échapper!

The Flame by Sally Foster 11RLO

There. On its last legs, alone, burning. Life almost out. Wax falling carelessly off the edges, like tears, adjacent to her own. Each curve, groove, placed perfectly. As interesting as a soul; one full of more characters than any book.

Its purple exterior glistens in its dying flame. Raging every emotion; she felt like she was looking in a mirror. The scent masked by crackling flames and salt from her unknown tears. It was going, creeping to death's door, a final plea for help. Gone. Her feelings weren't.

He hadn't burnt out, glowing with equal emotions, just like her candle.



Care and Achievement Co-ordinators

Our Care and Achievement Co-ordinators work with specific year groups to ensure the welfare and progress of pupils and are the first point of contact for parents.

They support children to achieve academically by establishing a positive learning environment, visiting and working in lessons and supervising and supporting individuals and groups of pupils.

Our team, and their work mobile phone number which parents can use to contact them, are pictured below.



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