



BARNARD CASTLE SCHOOL

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT NEWSLETTER

Dear Barney Parents and Guardians,

It has been another very busy term on the academic front; our Year 11 and 13 students have now completed their exams, and we wish them all the very best on their results days (17th August for A Level and BTEC, and 24th August for GCSE). Year 7-10 and 12 have also completed internal examinations to assess their progress this year, and we hope they take a great deal of encouragement – as well as useful lessons – from their results.

Outside the classroom, our students continue to benefit from a huge range of activities designed to stretch and challenge them, as well as offering them experiences which will inspire them to be curious and dig deeper into their subjects. Curiosity, as part of our Barney 'Go' pillar, is one of the biggest determinants of academic success: please discuss these activities with your children and encourage them to delve into subjects, topics or aspects that really captured their imagination this term!

Perhaps the best demonstration of this will come in the last week of the term, when Year 7 & 8 will take part in their Multi-Disciplinary Project Week. Year 8 may well remember this from last year, and I hope some parents remember the outstanding displays they produced: it is an opportunity to develop key skills, including teamwork, leadership, research, and project development. We have had some very exciting and creative projects over the years, and I am sure that this year will be no different.

Please do contact me if you would like to discuss any part of academic enrichment at Barney, or if you have any suggestions for other ways your son or daughter could develop their curiosity and help their journey.

Kind regards,

Dr. S. T. Nichols

Head of Academic Enrichment

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CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Rotary Club Technology Tournament Winners:

Freddie, Grace, Monte and Lewis



Newcastle University Maths Certificate Winners:

Seb and Ben



Newcastle University Maths Prize Winners:

Isabel and Florrie



OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Art

- Trip to Yorkshire Sculpture Park (Year 10)
 - Junior Arts Evening (Year 7-9)
 - GCSE Art Exhibition (Year 11)
 - Upper Sixth Art Exhibition (Year 12-13)
- Workshop with renowned artist Ian Murphy (Year 9-12)

Biology

- Brain and Forensics Day (Year 12 Biologists and Psychologists)

Business Studies

- Industry Day (Year 12)

Chemistry

- Ministry of Science Live – Science Saved the World (Darlington Hippodrome)

Classics

- Trip to Greece (Year 9-13)
- Trip to Hadrian's Wall, including Housesteads and Sycamore Gap (Year 9)

Computing

- Creative iMedia Website Workshop (Year 10-11)

Debating Matters

- Regional competition held at Durham University (Year 12)

Drama

- Theatre Ad Infinitum's 'If You Fall' at the Northern Stage
- Musical in a Week – 'The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee'

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- Rotary Club Technology Tournament (Year 12)



OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM



Economics

- Young Economist of the Year Competition
- ‘We need to talk about inflation’ talk by Steven D. King at Hexham Book Festival (Year 12-13)

English

- Workshop with ‘Barrie the Punctuation Man’ (Year 7)
- Visit of Quantum Theatre ‘A Christmas Carol’ (Years 10 and 11)
- The multi-genre reading challenge
- Young Writers’ Competition (Years 7-9)
- The Barney Biz (Years 11 – 13)
- Pioneers in Lit
- Promoting LGBTQIA+ Literature
- Visit to Stratford-upon-Avon (Year 9)
- Accelerated Reader
- Junior, Intermediate and Senior Public Speaking competitions
- Bookclub (Year 7)

Geography

- Field Trip to Newcastle (Year 12 A Level Geography students)
- Field Trip to Whitby (Year 12 A Level Geography students)
- Field Trip to York (Year 10 GCSE Geography students)
- Field Trip to Swaledale (Year 10 GCSE Geography students)
- Field Trip to Robin Hood’s Bay (all Year 8 pupils)
- Field Trip to Lake District (Year 12 A Level Geography students)
- Field Trip to Whinlater Forest (all Year 7 pupils)

Maths

- UKMT Junior Maths Challenge (Year 7-8)
- Advanced Maths Support Programme Problem Solving Day (Year 12-13)
- WISDOM (Women in Science Doing Outstanding Maths) (Year 9-10)

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Music

- Strictly Smokin' Big Band workshop with School Big Band
- Piano Masterclass with International Concert Pianist, Sarah Beth Briggs
 - SuRie Concert at the Witham
 - Young Musician of the Year competition
- Musical in a Week – 'The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee'

REP

- Theology and Religion interactive webinars with University of Chester (Year 13)
 - Shoah project plus speaker from Jewish community in Newcastle (Year 9)
 - Theology Philosophy and Religion Essay competition 2023 (Year 7-8)
 - Philosophy Club

PE

- 2-day climbing course at ROF 59 (Year 10)

Physics

- Physics Olympics at St. Peter's, York (Year 8)

Upcoming events: Multidisciplinary Project Week (Year 7-8)



Year 7 & 8

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This term in academic enrichment we have been learning about politics. We have learned about the UK political spectrum, as in the right and left wing. Left wing government such as Labour want the government to play a big role in taking care of their citizens. This includes things like healthcare like the NHS, education via state schools rather than private and affordable housing as well. These politicians believe everyone deserves equal opportunities and the government has responsibility to make that happen. On the other hand, in the right wing they prioritise individualism and personal responsibility. Right wing people may believe in things like lower taxes, a strong military and a limited government involvement in people's lives. We've also learned about UK political parties and where they sit on this spectrum. We also learned about elections and the first past the post system. A disadvantage is that it can result in an overall winner who does not have the majority of votes. This means that it may become harder to make decisions as there is not a majority. Another thing we learned about are the roles of a MP. The main responsibility is to raise their constituents' concerns in Parliament with ministers. We also had a visit from Dehenna Davison the MP for Bishop Auckland. She told us about things that she was working on and what their actions were to fix these problems. They must also act in the interests of their party. Another thing we've studied in Academic Enrichment is strike action. This is when a group of workers, such as train drivers, decide to stop working because they're not happy about something. Maybe they want more money, better working conditions or they might feel like they're not being treated fairly. This can cause problems for the company they work for because they might not be able to get certain things done without those workers. The workers usually tell their employer ahead of time that they're going on strike and they might try to talk to them and make a deal before it happens but sometimes they can't agree on things and the workers feel like going on strike is their only option. Lastly, we learned about taxation; this is when the government takes money from people's income or from the things they buy like toys or food in order to pay for things like schools, hospitals, roads and other important services that help everyone in the country. The government uses taxes to pay for things that everyone needs and everyone contributes to the cost based on how much money they have. I have definitely learned a lot from this. At first, it was a bit confusing and I couldn't really understand it but as we got into it, it all started to make much more sense. Now I'm glad I persevered with it and kept thinking. This is definitely a very interesting subject with lots of detail but I think everyone needs to know this information because it's very helpful to know in everyday life. In the future I would love to look into how the laws are passed and debated.

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Eleanor, Year 7

This term we have covered:

- *The UK political spectrum – 'left' and 'right' wing*
- *UK political parties*
- *Elections and the first-past-the-post system*
- *The role of an MP (including a visit from Dehenna Davison, MP for Bishop Auckland)*
- *Strike action*
- *Taxation*

Year 9-11

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Recently, in our biweekly meetings of academic enrichment this term, my peers and I have had the opportunity to discuss and debate a wide range of topics in current affairs. Focal points range from discussions surrounding tumultuous arguments of the benefits of social media, to the recent ruling of transgender women not being credited to compete in elite women's sport in Britain. Undoubtedly, we thoroughly look forward to our meetings, as we are given the opportunity to build crucial skills in debate whilst listening to our peer's beliefs and being able to build on them. It provides a safe space to formulate opinions and be exposed to new and challenging questions on relevant subject matters in society today. Academic Enrichment serves to catalyse these discussions which continue outside the classroom following the sessions. Additionally, this term, scholars were provided with insight and a glimpse of future academic possibilities through weekly sessions of webinars from Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Current students at the Universities, as well as two Old Barnardians, shared their experiences on the application process, followed by the importance of broadening our studies beyond the curriculum relevant to our A Level subjects. This was an unique opportunity and inspires my peers and I through wider understanding of academic life beyond secondary education.

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Matilda, Year 11

This term we have covered:

- *Should we prosecute war crimes from WWII?*
- *Harry and Meghan – what's all the fuss about?*
- *Why were there no female nominees at the Brit Awards?*
- *Is social media a good thing?*
- *The Spring Budget*
- *What's the problem with national debt?*
- *Should trans athletes be able to compete in elite women's sport?*
- *How would you tackle climate change?*
- *Applying to Oxbridge (Year 11)*

Year 12 & 13

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So far this year, we have tackled a wide range of topics in our enrichment sessions, from what should happen to Shamima Begum to whether private schools should maintain their charitable status. These meetings provide a great opportunity to express your own opinions as well as listen to and debate others' views. This helps you to analyse your own views further, and in most of the meetings, it led us to do further research into the subject. I think my favourite session so far would be the one on whether private schools should keep their charitable status simply because there were so many different perspectives and viewpoints expressed, which made for an even more interesting debate. Additionally, we have been able to seek further advice on applying to university and writing personal statements, which, although is quite a daunting task, has been a massive help with more articles, lectures, or work experience suggestions. These meetings provide a degree of independence to the debates as well as a useful chance to stay up to date on current affairs.

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Hope, Year 12

This term we have covered:

- *Should private schools keep their charitable status?*
- *What should happen to Shemima Begum?*
- *Should trans athletes be able to compete in elite women's sport?*
- *What's the problem with national debt?*
- *Applying to university and writing personal statements*



REAR OF THIS BUILDING
GENERAL PORTESQUE
14 NOVEMBER 1885