



KEEPING ON TRACK WITH NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Written by Nicole Ellis, Year 13

Ever find yourself, year after year, setting resolutions that you never actually end up achieving? Or maybe you've found yourself setting the exact same resolution as you did last year, because you never actually achieved it? If this sounds like you, then keep reading to find out how to well and truly follow through on your goals for the new year...

Step One:

Okay, so first things first, ask yourself is your goal attainable? Is it realistic? For instance, resolving to NEVER eat your favourite food again is more than likely to fail. Instead, set up a plan of action that will enable you to reduce the amount of times you consume it and to help control any cravings.

Step Two:

Once you've established both a realistic and attainable resolution, figure out a plan of smaller steps on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis (depending on what your goal is). This will help to break your goal down into smaller and more manageable steps, so that it doesn't seem as overwhelming or as difficult to accomplish.

Step Three:

Create a list of all the different reasons why you set this goal in the first place, why it is important that you achieve it, and finally, what you will gain when you accomplish it. This way, every time you feel yourself being tempted to give up, you can go back to your list and remind yourself why this goal is so personal and important to you.

Step Four:

Reward yourself for the mini successes along the way, that you have set in the leading up to the full accomplishment of your resolution. This will, again, encourage you to not give up and also act as a reminder for how much closer you've come to achieving your New Year's intention, compared to at the start of the year.

And there you have it: the four simple steps you need to follow to make sure everything you're hoping to accomplish this year actually happens. Remember to not be too critical of yourself for any little hiccups that occur along the way, just try your best to work hard to be persistent, and don't worry if you have any setbacks because you can simply start it again!

Valentine's Day Crossword

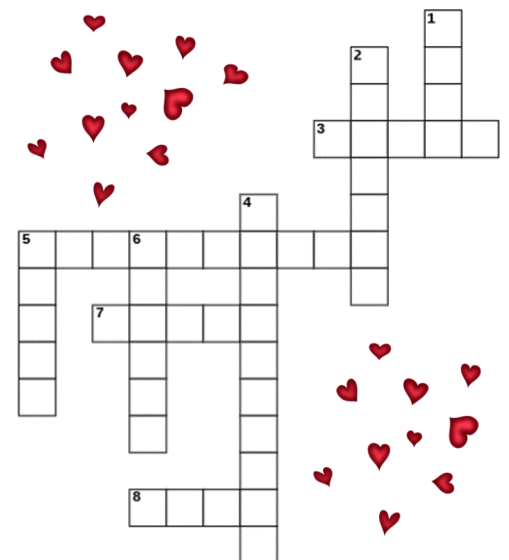
Created by Ashli Coggin, Year 9

Across

- 3. Most used shape around Valentine's Day (5)
- 5. Typical food bought as a gift (10)
- 7. To love and respect someone deeply (5)
- 8. I _____ you (4)

Down

- 1. Typical animal given as a gift (4)
- 2. To protect and care for someone lovingly (7)
- 4. The 14th February (10)
- 5. The angel associated with Valentine's Day (5)
- 6. Another word for hugging someone (6)



Return the completed crossword to Miss Taylor for 3 ePraise points.

Message from the Principal

Dear Parent / Carer,

Events from the end of last term

When I last wrote an article for 'The Torch' we were applying the finishing touches to the Christmas Hampers, that each tutor group prepares for local elderly residents. I am delighted to advise you that the 'Best in School' was from Tutor Group 8RPR. However the standard was very high, once again, across all tutor groups and it is certainly very moving to receive the heartfelt thanks of recipients. I know our students are genuinely pleased to be helping to make a difference at a time of year when not everyone finds it easy to enjoy themselves without some outside support.

In the final week of last half term we enjoyed our annual Christmas Concert – a very entertaining mixture of popular and seasonal music, with students from across all year groups. The standard of musicianship was very high and a large number of individual, ensemble and orchestral performances enjoyed well deserved praise from the appreciative audience. 79 students were involved, enjoyed by an audience of over 200.

In the final week of last term, we also enjoyed our Year 13 Presentation Evening, where we were delighted to welcome back the largest number of former students, and their parents, that any of us could remember, for the annual presentation of certificates and awards. It was a real delight to hear how our former students were adapting to the world beyond school, whether university, apprenticeships or the world of work—including how many were getting used to more independence through activities such as their own cooking and ironing.

The last day of term was celebrated in style with a Christmas lunch for all students and staff. Everyone sat down together in the main hall to share in the Christmas festivities. The kitchen staff served up three sittings of 650 Christmas lunches - this was a massive feat and was delivered in style by our kitchen staff: they should be commended on their efforts. Giving students and staff the opportunity to sit together in one big venue, enjoy their Christmas lunch, laugh, engage in conversation, pull a cracker or two and listen to Christmas songs is important and marked the end of an excellent term at the school. At Wath Academy we believe these types of experiences are vital in terms of building culture, community and character.



Sixth form external exam results

We have now had published the final national performance tables for last year's Year 13 external examination results. Last summer's A-level results placed us 1st across all Rotherham providers for progress, including both schools with a sixth form and sixth form colleges. Our applied qualifications performed even more strongly, placing us not only 1st within the Local Authority but 2nd across the whole of South Yorkshire, which included all providers from Rotherham, Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield, including independent schools. Our value added score of +0.51 meant that Wath students made, on average, more than half a grade more progress than similar students nationally. Once again, well done to all of our students who produced these commendable results.

Trial Exams, Parents' Evenings & Revision

Year 11 students have had the opportunity of further Trial Exams this half term. These have helped inform the data drop for their third Learning Cycle of the year and this information will be shared at the Parents' Evening on 25 February. Year 10 and Year 8 students have already had a Parents' Evening this half term, where feedback was provided by subject teachers from their second Learning Cycle of the year. Year 11 are now preparing intensively for their third set of Trial Exams, scheduled for March, in English, Maths & Science. There is a lot of evidence to suggest that regular exam practice makes students better prepared and more confident for their final external exams.

Our current Year 12 students have recently completed their applications for Higher Education. 80% of Year 12 students have applied for university, which is a much higher proportion than the national average. Four students have received offers to study at Oxford or Cambridge.

In the last few weeks of this half term the Sixth Form and Year 11 pastoral support teams completed several evenings of interviewing potential Year 12 students for next academic year. A large number of students have already expressed a serious desire to join us in September. A third of these are from local secondary schools other than Wath. Our external students add a real richness to the sixth form community. All applicants have been asked to bring their most recent report with them, as we assess motivation, attendance and punctuality, as well as academic progress. Attendance at lessons is essential for success and we are currently on a drive in school towards our 97% attendance target. Please do help support us in your child attending school when at all possible.

An extensive programme of support and revision has been in place for Year 11 for some weeks now and will run every evening, and many lunchtimes, until the end of the examination period. We are also running an extensive programme of revision throughout the February half term holiday. We urge all Year 11 parents to ensure that their child takes full advantage of what is on offer. I am very appreciative of the staff, in all subject areas, who are giving of their time so willingly to support students, not only beyond the school day but also in the holidays.

Gym, Dance & Movement Evenings

As I write, we are preparing for our annual Gym, Dance and Movement Evening performances. This year the theme is 'Top of the Pops'. Anyone in a similar generation to my own will certainly remember 'Pan's People' and the staff dance will be aiming to emulate their success. I hope you have the opportunity to come on one of the evenings. Our own students, together with pupils from our feeder primary schools, will once again provide high quality, creative performances. It is particularly pleasing to note that around 200 Wath students will participate: an excellent, inclusive event for the whole school community.

Changes to the Year 9 curriculum from September 2020

We have recently undertaken a review of the curriculum we offer at Key Stage 3, in consultation with senior leaders across Maltby Learning Trust. We are keen to build on the latest research to further improve provision for all learners here at Wath Academy. As a result, we are set to introduce a new curriculum model in September 2020, that will ensure that all students have access to a broad and

balanced curriculum offer.

In the new model, the academy will teach the Key Stage 3 curriculum over Years 7, 8 and 9. This will ensure that all students are taught a broad range of subjects in depth, as exemplified by the National Curriculum. These changes will ensure that we provide a solid foundation for all students, across a wide range of subject areas, in preparation for option choices at the end of Year 9. The Key Stage 4 curriculum will then be delivered over Years 10 and 11 and will provide an even greater choice than in previous years. All students, irrespective of their ability or special educational needs, will have equal access to the curriculum.

Whilst the government does not advocate any particular curriculum model, it is clear that the intention is for a curriculum that is ambitious for all students, and is as broad as possible for as long as possible. We recognise that the planned move to a three year Key Stage 3 curriculum will allow more time for students to prepare for the specialisation that takes place at GCSE level. Many other schools have adopted this model and, whilst this in itself is not a reason to change, it means that our students will not be disadvantaged when competing against other school leavers in the region. Parents of current Year 8 students will be invited to an Information Evening about the changes to the Year 9 curriculum on 19 March.

Teaching & Learning

We have clear expectations in terms classroom practice through the development of a Wath 'Teaching and Learning Standard'. We have introduced new technology, through 'IRIS Connect', to capture explicit examples of best practice from teaching staff. It is expected that, by the end of the year, the video footage will comprehensively mirror each individual element of our 'Teaching & Learning Standard' and be an important vehicle to further improve pedagogy and practice. This is being supported by a relentless commitment to the professional development of staff, which includes an hour per week, after students have left at the end of school.

Your continued support of the school is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Taylor

Principal

Updates from Wath Academy

Dates for the Diary

Some important forthcoming dates:

- 11-13 February – Gym, Dance & Movement Evenings
- 14 February – INSET day: school closed to students
- 17 February – half-term break begins
- 24 February – new half term begins (for students and staff)
- 25 February – Year 11 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers
- 3 March – Year 9 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers
- 19 March – Year 8 information Evening about the Year 9 curriculum
- 24 March – Year 12 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers
- 31 March - Year 13 Student & Parent Consultation Evening with subject teachers.

Lost Property

We have numerous items of lost property at the moment ranging from coats to glasses. We will be donating everything that has not been claimed by Thursday 13 February to the local charity shops. If you have lost anything since September 2019 ,please come and have a look! Coats and items of clothing are based in the Medical Room, smaller items are with Student Reception.

Introducing Wath Academy's School Gateway

The ICT Support Team have been busy preparing for the launch of a new smartphone school-parent communication app called School Gateway, which will become a central hub for school communication. Some of you may be familiar with School Gateway as it is commonly used by primary schools in the Barnsley area. It has several key

features.

- A messaging page so we can send you messages in a similar manner to WhatsApp.
- You can see your child's timetable.
- You can see the contact information we hold about you, and you can use the app to notify us if that information is incorrect.
- There are key links, all in one place, to online services such as Show My Homework, ParentPay and the school calendar.
- The app can be used to email out student reports.
- The app works on Apple and Android devices and is accessible through a web browser on tablets, laptops and desktop computers.

Why change?

The school currently sends a lot of information out by post and we believe that moving towards app messaging will save time and reduce costs associated with printing and mailing letters. It will also guarantee that messages reliably get to parents / carers.

What do I need to do?

In the first instance, you don't need to do anything; we will send out a letter as part of a data gathering exercise so that the roll out of School Gateway goes smoothly. Once this has been completed, we will send you a text message with further instructions on how to register and install School Gateway.

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Doctor Who

By Thomas Armitage, Year 8

Recently, in the new season of *Doctor Who*, we have seen many changes including some new friends and some old ones. Before we go into more detail...*Doctor Who* is a sci-fi/drama series about an alien lady called the Doctor who travels through time and space in her Tardis, a time and space machine. What's more is whenever she wants to go on an outing with her companions, the Tardis takes her to a planet or time where there is usually danger.

In the new series, many new creatures have been introduced including 'Praxeus', a very dangerous virus spread by sea birds that have eaten plastic, along with the unknown species which ganged up with the Master, who is also back, despite the death of his previous incarnation (Missy). Many old aliens and characters have come back as well, including Captain Jack, an old friend of the Doctor and not to mention the 'Jadoon in the lagoon' who haven't been in *Doctor Who* for years. We hope to see more 'old friends' in the brand new season, which is on every Sunday at 7:10.

Why not get in touch with the *Torch* and tell us one character or alien you would like to see in the new series?

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The Best Doctor Who

Of course, Doctor Who hasn't always been a female character. This only happened in the most recent regeneration.

Torch journalists Grace Clowrey and Ellisia Bowman did a survey to

uncover which Doctor (from the relaunch in 2005) is the school's favourite. The results were as follows: in joint bottom were Christopher Eccleston (9th Doctor) and Peter Capaldi (12th Doctor) with 0% of the vote. In third place with 10% was Matt Smith (11th Doctor), leaving Jodie Whittaker (13th Doctor) in third place with 30% and meaning that David Tennant (10th Doctor) took a large majority with 60% of the votes.

Is this the greatest "Show"?

Aidan Jennings, Year 9

The Show 2020 was revealed recently for PlayStation 4, and as I am slightly more than hyped, I decided to review the previous entry in the franchise that literally no Englishman cares about, but me. That franchise being *MLB The Show*. I won't be able to talk about everything in this review because it would end up too long, so just know there will be parts of the game I don't talk about but I've tried to talk about the most important.

For people who have never heard of or played *The Show* franchise before, the easiest way to describe it is to say it is the *FIFA* of baseball. There is a metric tonne of content in the game. First, there is 'Road to the Show' mode then 'March to October' and finally 'Franchise' mode (I forgot the online mode as well). In 'Road to the Show', you can't really control what team you are in because even if you get the team you want, you could get traded to another team.

The difficulty of the game strikes a perfect balance between too easy and too difficult. Homeruns happen a little too frequently but other than that the difficulty is great. Graphics are decent but could be better.

Now on to some of the negatives of the game. 'Franchise' mode has an agonisingly long tutorial and is a bit 'pay to win' - still, it is ultimately fun! Another problem is that the 'Road to the Show' mode doesn't have an ending, which was a massive disappointment. One final thing to mention is the online mode. I feel like this doesn't work well, doesn't need to be online and has 'pay to win' written all over it. I'm not a fan.

In conclusion, though I really enjoyed this game and think it is amazing, there are lots of problems. I think if you haven't tried it before you should, especially if you enjoy other sports games on PlayStation, but if you have and you didn't enjoy it, then it doesn't get any better.

Overall, I'd say that *MLB The Show 2019* deserves 7/10—hopefully the 2020 version can build on the positives of its predecessor while improving on some of the negatives, especially the terrible online mode!

Make March a Month of Reading:



Stalking Jack the Ripper by Kerri Maniscalco

Reviewed by Molly Hammerton, Year 12

This may sound like any other crime novel which includes the infamous Jack the Ripper as the main 'villain', or another non-fiction book following the grotesque crimes and debating the killer's possible identity. However,

Stalking Jack the Ripper, written by Kerri Maniscalco, whilst still using the canonical murderer as the main antagonist, manages to develop a plot which is still exciting and whose charm lies crucially within the main character's personality and power.

As many will probably know, the Victorian era was not the kindest towards women, with limited rights and a society which trained them to be reliant on men, even into their later lives. Yet, Audrey Rose Wadsworth (our main character) is written by Maniscalco in such a beautiful way that she subverts these expected standards almost completely. As a woman of higher class, Audrey Rose is supposed to be fragile and "unintelligent", merely there to please the eye of any potential male suitors who walk by. Despite this, Audrey Rose has a thirst for knowledge, particularly of the forensic science variety. Through the help of her uncle, Audrey Rose is able to expand her knowledge of the human body through the dissection of cadavers, much to the distaste of her incredibly traditional father. Through her continued study, she eventually meets the seemingly animatronic Thomas Cresswell (who may or may not resemble some of the characteristics of Sherlock Holmes), who is also flirtatious beyond decency within the time period.

Whilst studying with her uncle and Thomas, the corpse of Mary Ann Nichols appears in the laboratory and throws Audrey Rose and her companions head-first into chasing down 'Leather Apron' (a name used for the Whitechapel Murderer before Jack the Ripper was coined) before Whitechapel runs with rivers of blood and Jack the Ripper disappears forever.

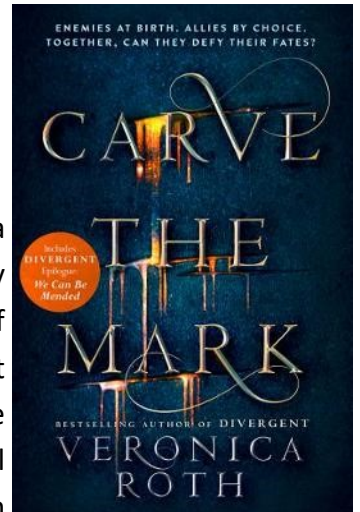
Overall, I enjoyed this book immensely as I have always

had a fascination with the Jack the Ripper cold case and this fictional adaptation creates a genuine feeling of suspense and mystery for the reader, which is balanced perfectly with the humorous interactions between Cresswell and Wadsworth and come together to form a well-rounded book filled with positive messages and role-models which are sorely needed in media at this point in time, as well as a strong female lead, who still experiences emotion and is feminine whilst being incredibly intelligent and talented at her chosen profession. I would highly recommend this book and the rest of the series, which are *Hunting Prince Dracula*, *Escaping from Houdini* and *Capturing the Devil*.

Carve the Mark – by Veronica Roth

Reviewed by Grace Clowrey, Year 9

Carve the Mark is a dystopian teen book by Veronica Roth, the author of the *Divergent* books. It is set in a world where everyone gets a "currentgift", a special power unique to them



(which can be anything) at some point in their lives. The book follows the paths of Cyra, a girl who can cause immense pain with a single touch, and Akos, the only boy who can suppress it. They live on enemy planets, but what will happen when their paths cross? This is a thrilling book, with lots of twists, turns and cliffhangers, and I would recommend it to fans of *Divergent*. There is also a sequel - *The Fates Divide*, which concludes the characters' story.

Saiki K by Shuichi Asou

Reviewed by Ellisia Bowman, Year 9

Saiki Kusuo No Sainan is a manga created by Shuichi Asou. The manga has also been turned into a series of anime with Jerry Jewell being the English voice actor for Saiki K.

The book (and anime) is about a high school student who was born with psychic powers along with telekinesis, telepathy, pyrokinesis and many more. His

One Amazing Book for Each Week

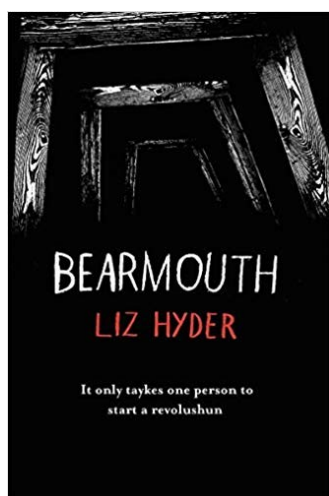


powers allow him to do anything he pleases yet prefers a normal life and doesn't reveal his powers. Both book and anime are made up of small comedic skits that follow Saiki's life.

If you enjoy comedic school life, then this book would be perfect as it follows just that.

Bearmouth by Liz Hyder

Reviewed by Isobel Clowrey,
Year 7



Bearmouth is a great book meant for older readers from 11+. It's set in a mine, Bearmouth, where sunlight is a distant memory. The tale is told by Newt Coombes in the first person, the spelling phonetic because Newt is being taught to read by an older mentor – "Thomas is my best friend tho hes twice my age an more." Bit difficult, huh? Don't let that put you off. It's a story of adventure and danger, with good life-lessons on friendship and love.

The plot gets going when a young rebel called Devlin is exiled to the mine and challenges the accepted order. Up to now Newt and the other miners – most of whom are grown men – have put up with their fate, seeking only to survive. But as Devlin says, "It only takes one person to start a revolushun," and soon Newt is caught up in a gripping narrative of violence and betrayal.

At first, Devlin is thought to be a 'Devil from Hell' by Newt, but later on, he (Devlin), earns Newt's trust and he leans about atheism, and how the capital-g-God, could be a scam.

Read this thrilling book as it is sure to capture your attention, if you don't get caught up in the writing style!

The Book Fair

By Oliver Jacques, Year 7

Books are wonderful but Book Fairs are even better. In the school library, the book fair started at the end of January for one week, and even better, all books were HALF PRICE! Congratulations to the ten students who volunteered and helped to sell the posters, pens, pencils and most of all the books. In total, we took an amazing £699 in sales. The top selling books were *Heartstopper* and *Five Night at Freddie's* which are being ordered to go in to the library, so keep a look out for them appearing soon.



The Community

By Emily Rodgers, Year 8

The community sector at school aims to bring people inside and outside of the school together. We recently set a goal to raise £2000 and we have almost reached our goal, here are some of the other fundraising and charity events:

Friday 13th March – Run, walk, hop, bike, swim, skip or skate a mile for Sports Relief; sponsorship forms will be available from student reception or the library at a later date.

May (date to be confirmed) - Bake sale, any suggestions for charities to donate the proceeds to will be appreciated.

June/July - A food bank collection in order to help out less fortunate families over the summer.

News, Politics and Current Affairs:

Holocaust Remembrance Day

By Laura Rodgers, Year 12

This year, Holocaust Memorial Day fell alongside the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp in Poland. The camp was initially used to house prisoners, but soon morphed into one of the most infamous parts of Hitler's 'Final Solution'. 1.1 million of the total 12 million 'Untermensch' or 'under-people' were murdered in cold blood in the camp, and thousands of others were subject to the horrifying conditions, before finally being liberated by Soviet soldiers in 1945. Memorial services were held across the globe, where thousands of people participated to show respect for those who were murdered.

Australian fires

Olivia Wydell, Year 10

A prolonged spell of extraordinary weather in Australia, where temperatures have climbed to a record-breaking 40.9 degrees Celsius, has caused a large number of wildfires to break out across the country, particularly in the south-east, causing a huge impact for the environment. The fires have continued throughout the heatwave, despite firefighters' unending attempts to extinguish them. They caused major risk to both Australian people and animals, destroying houses and habitats simultaneously.

Nine of Australia's hottest ten years on record have occurred since 2005, and this has been accredited to climate change. Climate change is proven to cause an increase in extreme weather, like the heatwave and dry conditions that Australia experienced.

However, Australia's current Prime Minister – Scott Morrison – was reluctant to admit that climate change was a contributing factor, calling it a "delusion". After major protests throughout Australia, the government admitted that they had not handled the situation in the best way.

They are still not focusing on solving the problem. A suggestion made by the government was to adapt to global warming, rather than to change their policies. There is lots of reluctance to stop burning fossil fuels.

Unfortunately, at least twenty-four people have died, and over a thousand homes have burnt down. There are an estimated 1.25 billion animals affected by the fires, many feared dead.

The tragedy of the fires will be hard to forget, and the cause of it all remains a significant issue.

Greta Thunberg: Voice of a Generation or 'Just Another Teenager'?

By Laura Rodgers, Year 12

Greta Thunberg is known worldwide as one of the first climate 'activists' and is often regarded as a role model by many young people. She started to capture the attention of the mass media in August 2018, when she began campaigning for action on climate change outside the Swedish parliament. What initially began as a solo mission soon gained international traction, with young people around the world participating in 'Skolstrejk för klimatet'. Her work has had a huge impact on how the world views climate change as a social issue, with some even dubbing it the 'Greta effect'. Thunberg has received worldwide praise, from TIME newspaper, becoming their youngest ever 'TIME person of the year' to being a Nobel peace prize nominee. Her recent passage across the Atlantic in a zero-emissions yacht was heavily covered by the media, as is most of her public presence. Her work as an activist has become instrumental to the involvement of younger generations in climate activism, with many young people being inspired to lower their carbon footprints by her work.

After reading these things, one may come to the conclusion that 'she lives an ideal life' or that 'she's an inspiration' but she has faced criticism from lots of directions, from your average twitter troll right up to world renowned journalists and international politicians, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Russian president Vladimir Putin, U.S. president Donald Trump, and some media commentators such as Piers Morgan. Trump has repeatedly tweeted about Thunberg, saying she was "So ridiculous" and that "Greta must work on her anger management problem, then go to a good old-fashioned movie with a friend!

Wath Students Speak Out

Chill Greta, Chill!". Others who have attacked Greta online face her quick-witted remarks and sarcastic sense of humour, which only endear her further to the general public. Many of the attacks target her age, stating that she is misinformed and often oversimplifies the issues, or that she is being manipulated by her parents and the climate protest movement as a whole. Other attacks are far more personal, using her Asperger syndrome, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and selective mutism as ways of tearing her down. Despite these challenges Thunberg continues with her work as an activist, stating that her disorders are her "superpower". Although Thunberg loves her role as a climate activist, she has repeatedly stated that she does not want to be seen as an "inspiration". This is not because she does not want to show people the harsh realities of climate change, but instead because she feels as if she shouldn't have to. Most teenagers have the luxury of a "normal" life, but she does not. That was taken away from her when she became a figure of outward defiance, who must repeatedly teach adults who have access to some of the world's leading scientists and research programmes and still ignore the facts. This is not a role that she should have had to take but was instead forced to due to the sheer ignorance of the masses.

Megxit

By Caitlin Martin-Smith, Year10

Meghan Markle joined the royal family on May 19th 2018. Since then, there has been a lot of media attention, which has not always been positive, particularly towards Meghan. For example, one newspaper headline praised Kate Middleton for her "homegrown bouquet of lily of the valley", whereas the exact same type of flowers used at Meghan's wedding ceremony were attacked as "dangerous" as they "could have been harmful to princess Charlotte" in another headline.

As you can see, the press has not exactly been very welcoming of the new addition to the royal family and these aren't the only examples. For example, one newspaper reported about Middleton, saying,

"Pregnant Kate tenderly cradles her baby bump while wrapping up her royal duties ahead of maternity leave". When the same situation arrived for Markle, a newspaper attacked with the following: "Why can't Meghan Markle keep her hands off her bump?"

Clearly, the media has taken the addition of Meghan Markle to the royal family in a very negative light. Is this why Meghan and Harry chose to be rid of their duties as members of the royal family? If so, how has the rest of the family taken this sudden news?

First, let's address the question 'how has the rest of the family taken this news?' The queen wrote a statement addressing these issues. It read "My family and I are entirely supportive of Harry and Meghan's desire to create a new life as a young family."

Meghan and Harry have since moved to Canada. To make themselves more financially independent, they have decided to stop receiving money from public tax. However, this money only acted as 5% of their income; the other 95% came from and still comes from Prince Charles.

So, it seems that the royal family have dealt with this well, but are they just putting on an act? Even if they're not, I doubt that we're going to here an end of it from the press anytime soon...

Dancing on Ice

By Emily Rodgers, Year 8

Dancing on Ice is the hit show on ITV, which attracts a high number of viewers year on year. In a twist, the latest series features a same gendered couple, who took the rink in a heartfelt dance, along to the tune of 'High Hopes' by Panic! At the Disco, rocking the audience and moving the judges.

This is the first time in history that a same gendered couple have ever danced together, with *Strictly Come Dancing* also now announcing that they are going to have another pair taking to the floor themselves this year.

There has been a lot of backlash over this decision but many people are appreciative of the representation in the media.

Wath Students Get Creative:

HachiShaku Sama

Part 2

A short story by Isobelle Fenton, Year 8

“The bustling car park was filled with excited year eevens, going on a school trip to Japan. They had paid, packed some clothes, and were waiting for the coach to arrive. Geordhon was searching for her friend, Isaac. He was never where she could see him.

“‘Boo!’ someone shouted to her, making her jump. When she turned around, she saw her friend was in hysterics. ‘You! You jumped out of your skin!’ giggled Isaac, eventually calming down.

“Geordhon scolded him, ‘You idiot!’ Shoving him away playfully, she added, ‘Why would you do that?’

“As they boarded the coach, they searched for seats together. At the back, no one was sitting there, for unknown reasons.

“‘Shall we go to the back?’ Geordhon asked, but when she turned around, Isaac was pointing at some seats at the front.

“‘What about these?’ he was insisting.

“‘Isaac,’ Geordhon said, slowly. ‘You know I get sick if I sit at the front,’ she began walking to the back when Isaac gave in, following her.

“‘What if you don’t this time?’ he asked hopefully.

“‘We all know you hate it when I am not well,’ she replied. As they sat down, the coach began moving. The ride seemed to last forever, and it was dark before they got to their first stop.

“At the hotel for the night, Geordhon placed a picture of her mother on her bedside table, and began to get changed into her pyjamas. She had been placed in a room with Isaac, who was changing in the bathroom. She got a call from her Dad, to check how she was doing so far. Before she hung up, she heard a deep laugh, almost inhuman, and a tapping on the window. The charm, given to her by her mother, had turned black, which she found concerning. She glanced over to the picture of her mother, only to see a tall figure, with a paining grin, and a hand over her mother’s shoulder. There came a tapping at the door, and she looked away from the image.

“‘Hello?’ Geordhon asked, and she heard her teacher’s voice say, ‘It’s only Miss. Gradreight, is everything good, you have everything?’

“‘Yes, thank you, Miss.’

“As Isaac came from the bathroom, she looked back, suspiciously, to the photo, only to be shocked; the figure next to her mother was gone.”

To be continued...

Fate's Grip

Part 1

A short story by Maxton Hutchinson, Year 8

Brooke woke to a post-it note on her bed side table. It read ‘Hey there get out of bed ;)’ She rolled back into bed and stared at the ceiling with a smile. The bedroom door creaked open as a prophecy reader like voice came from behind: “Always do as the note says.”

Brooke began to break out into laughter as he crept in. “I know it’s you, Mark!” she said, laughing. “I’ll see you and the kids down stairs.”

Brooke rolled out of bed and put her blue and purple

THE TORCH Journalists

This edition was produced by Isobel Clowrey, Thomas Armitage, Maxton Hutchinson, Emily Rodgers, Alexandra Cook, Isobelle Fenton, Grace Clowrey, Ngai Wa Yuen, Ellisia Bowman, Ashli Coggin, Elena Cretu, Olivia Wydell, Caitlin Martin-Smith, Molly Hammerton-Woodhouse, Emily Balaiss, Laura Rodgers, Nicole Ellis and Miss Taylor. Thanks also to Oliver Jacques, Miss Taylor, Mr Bishop and Miss Perry.

If you are interested in helping to produce THE TORCH, come along to G11 on Thursday afternoons, 2.40-3.40 pm, or see Miss Taylor for more information.

Poems, Short Stories and More

cross hatched shirt and dark blue skinny jeans on and went downstairs.

She walked behind the sofa and kissed Riley and Crystal on the head as she headed to the kitchen. Brooke began to sweep her hand along the white marble work surface when she saw Mark's phone vibrating at the other side. She rushed over to see what it was. As she picked his phone up she saw that it was Mark's mum 'Why is she calling at 6 in the morning?' Brooke wondered.

Without thinking, she answered. "Hello?" she said questioningly.

"Oh my God, Brooke is that you! Is Mark there?" Mark's mum answered.

She made something up on the spot as she wanted to know what his mother sounded so worried about.

"His dad passed away last night," she began to explain as Mark came in.

Mark asked if Brooke had seen his phone anywhere.

She quickly ended the call and put the phone in her pocket. "I'll go check upstairs," she said as she rushed off.

Brooke ran to the bathroom; turned on the tap and splashed her face as glistening tears rolled down her face. "Damn," she muttered under her breath as she cleared away the tears and went back downstairs with Mark's phone. She gave Mark his phone.

"Is everything okay?" asked Mark with a worried face.

Brooke nodded as she thought back to the phone call.

Brooke ran to the bathroom and leaned over the sink with her arms crossed looking down into the sink. 'What do I tell him?' Brooke wondered to herself. She took her arms off the sink and sat on the dark blue tiled floor leaning back on the wall with her legs tucked in and her arms round them. 'Why now?' It was Mark's birthday tomorrow and that's not the sort of news you want on your birthday—or the day

Our Future Selves

By Emily Rodgers, Year 8

Sometimes, when you are struggling for motivation, you might think about what your life will look like in the future. I asked people if they had ONE question to ask their future self, what would they ask? Here are the results:

Are you okay?

Are you happy?

Do you have a good career?

Did you get a good English Literature grade?

How many dogs do you have?

Are you happy with who you are?

Are you still friends with everyone I know now?

How are you?

How is your life?

Did anything good actually happen?

What happened?

How's it been?

Do you think you made the most of your life?

What was my biggest mistake?

before, for that matter.

The bathroom door creaked open as a pair of shimmering ocean blue eyes peered through. "Mum," Crystal paused for a second. "Are... you... okay?"

Brooke dropped her head down as she wiped the tears away. "Yeah, everything's fine," she answered.

Crystal pushed open the door, walked in slowly and sat beside Brooke.

Brooke decided not to tell Mark as she thought it was for his own good. He was already in a bad place and it would only make it worse.

But was this the right decision?

Sport and House Update

History behind the Houses at Wath



Most people are familiar with the Houses at Wath, but do you know why they were chosen? Each issue, *The Torch* will feature one of the Houses, and it is now the turn of Rome. Read on to learn about the history and values upon which the House system at Wath is based!

Rome

The civilization began as an Italic settlement in the Italian Peninsula, that grew into the city of Rome and which subsequently gave its name to the empire over which it ruled and to the widespread civilisation the empire developed. The Roman Empire expanded to become one of the largest empires in the ancient world.

Ancient Roman civilisation has contributed to modern language, religion, society, technology, law, politics, government, warfare, art, literature, architecture and engineering. Rome professionalised and expanded its military and created a system of government called *res publica*, the inspiration for modern republics such as the United States and France. It achieved impressive technological and architectural feats, such

as the construction of an extensive system of aqueducts and roads, as well as the construction of large monuments, palaces and public facilities.

Rome House Today

The Head of House for Rome is Miss Majer.

Rome House Values

Confidence
Credibility
Faithfulness
Reliability
Trust

Next edition, we will feature Sparta. Until then, don't forget the reasons we have a House system at all: to build teamwork, confidence and community through competition. All these qualities will help students flourish, not just in the classroom (where they can demonstrate the key drivers), but also in the wider world beyond Wath.

