



ALL THINGS CHRISTMAS

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By Igrayne Whitelam, Year 7

Read on for some handy tips to make the most of the festive season!

Beating the Rush

I know that there are not many bad things about Christmas, but the thing that bugs me the most is the rush when all the shops have run out of presents, decorations and cards. And then when you try to beat the rush by shopping early, there's hardly anything on sale compared to normal.

Personally, I'd prefer to try and get things at the beginning of the rush. If you can't, it can be fun to make things as an alternative to shopping in the rush!

Presents

If you're struggling to find presents that people would like, why not try the following steps:

- Think of their personality.

- Try to avoid getting things that they already have...but this might give you some inspiration!

- Try to avoid getting the same as what other people are getting them.

Decorations

As you know, there are so many ways to decorate at Christmas. Some people go for a modern look with a white or grey coloured tree, and like me, some people like the traditional way of using lots of green. I like trees being colossal and towering but sometimes you must think logically and see if the shape and size is suitable.

It's usually a good idea to have small trees for bedrooms, and the bigger trees are supposed to go in a living room or a lobby where there is more space.

Merry Christmas from everyone at *The Torch*!

Message from the Principal

Dear Parent/Carer,

I write to you at the end of a challenging but very positive first full term. I'd like to start by thanking you for your support, understanding and patience during recent months. We have endeavoured to do everything we can to keep our students and staff safe whilst delivering the education our community deserves.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first term at Wath Academy. The warm welcome I have received from staff, students, governors, parents and the community has made my first few months much easier. Prior to starting in September, many people told me there is something special about Wath Academy and the community it serves; I now fully understand what they meant. The history of the school is something which makes us unique: the house system, the *Torch* and our sporting heritage, among many other things, continue to keep us rooted to our beginnings as well as positively contributing to the future of our students. These long-standing traditions along with our community are what makes the academy so special.

The pride and investment felt around the academy heightens the importance of our vision 'delivering exceptional learning experiences that enable all young people to thrive in a competitive world and lead successful and fulfilling lives'. We remain passionate and undeterred in the pursuit of becoming a beacon of educational excellence. There is a positive momentum gathering at the academy despite the challenges that Covid-19 has thrown our way, which is testament to the incredible amount of hard work, no excuses and never give up attitudes of staff and students. We look forward to continuing this after the Christmas holiday.

I hope you all have a safe and restful break, and we look forward to welcoming our students back on January 4th, 2021.

On behalf of everybody at Wath Academy, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Ransome

Principal



Important Upcoming Dates

Thursday 18th December:

Break up for Christmas Holiday.

Monday 4th January:

Return to school after Christmas Holiday.

Tuesday 26th January:

Year 10 Parents' Evening

Monday 11th January:

Year 11 Trial Exams begin (for two weeks)

Monday 8th February:

Year 12 Trial Exams begin (for one week)

Tuesday 9th February:

Year 11 Parents' Evening

Friday 12th February:

Break up for Spring Half Term Holiday.

Photo of the Month

By Molly Harper, Year 7



Interested in getting your own photograph into the *Torch*? Next month, we want a photograph of the month which perfectly captures spring! Send entries to Miss Taylor at: etaylor@wathacademy.com.

Science and STEM Wath Academy

The North Star Science School



In December, some of our best science students at Wath got to take part in the North Star Science School Event. Originally planned to be based at the new Gulliver's Kingdom theme park, the event was redesigned to take place online over three days.

On Tuesday, 11L1 were wowed by star guest Professor Brian Cox and his talk on black holes. Brian showed us how Einstein's theory explains black holes, as well as discussing current work scientists are undertaking to try and understand them better.

On Wednesday, 9L1 enjoyed a really interesting lecture on climate change, where they had the opportunity to ask local engineers some really interesting questions. They then researched what local authorities could do to help with flood defence systems.

On Thursday, students in 10T1 were lucky enough to take part in a session focusing on careers in engineering. The students learnt about the different routes into engineering, whether that be the academic route of going to university or taking on an apprenticeship; they then heard from people in industry who had taken these different routes. The event also focused on the different roles in engineering with industry experts from Gulliver's Kingdom, Rolls Royce and university students who were studying biomedical engineering and engineers who are working to help reduce our carbon footprint. The talks were informative and gave students a real insight into the different aspects of engineering.



Science Visitors

By Abigail Germany, Year 9 and Ruby Leach, Year 7

Throughout the course of the week commencing Monday 23rd November, medical students addressed pupils from Years 7, 8 and 9 on the topic of careers in medicine.



Year 9 Perspective:

They educated us using a hierarchical system based on the level of careers in medicine, starting with the top jobs which are dentists, consultants and specialists. For example, general health practitioners (more informally known as GPs), paediatricians and anaesthetists. Unsurprisingly, the salary for these careers is large, around an average of £56,000.

Below are therapy, nursing and emergency. Examples of careers in these fields are physiotherapists, paediatric nurses, speech and language therapists, paramedics and psychologists; these are all vital jobs in order to provide great healthcare.

Then, we have jobs such as receptionists and porters. Even though these, generally, get paid the least, they are definitely just as vital as any other career in a hospital or practice. They keep the flow of patients and order going.

Although the current restrictions prevented them from talking to us face-to-face, the medical students gave us a very informative and inspiring look into careers in medicine, giving many of us a perspective of the future that we never saw before!

Year 7 Perspective:

During the medical talk, Sophie was explaining all about the medical jobs that we can do, for example a midwife or a doctor. She also told us how long it would take to complete studying at university or wherever you go to study. She told us what jobs would take longer to achieve than other jobs, like a doctor and dentist would take between 5 and 6 years of studying or longer. Other jobs require fewer years of studying, including some jobs, like emergency dispatcher, which don't require any studying at all.

Science and STEM at Wath Academy

Industrial Cadets Week

**A UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO
THE STEM INDUSTRY
THROUGH VIRTUAL
EXPERIENCES**

Year 10 were lucky enough to take part in Industrial Cadets week: activities and virtual courses to spark a real-life interest in STEM careers.

Our session was run by General Electric (GE) and initially introduced the company to students and explained how broad the company's span is, from healthcare to powering aircraft carriers.

We were then introduced to some young people who work for GE who talked about the route to working there. Some had gone to university but others had accessed their career via an apprenticeship. They talked about their rotational graduate training scheme and how it provided a "well rounded engineering knowledge base", also about internships, which are the non-graduate route, which involves working in lots of different areas and doing a specific project. The apprentices talked about how they work for four days in the business and spend a day a week in university or college, and how they can continually apply what they are learning to their role.

Staff then talked specifically about their roles and a typical day in their working week, which gave us a real insight into working in engineering. There was vast variety of tasks and projects discussed, such as software and component design and working on wind turbines. They provided some great advice on getting into engineering careers, such as "don't be afraid to fail" and get as much STEM experience as you can outside of the classroom.

The next section was on recruitment and how you can stand out when you apply for graduate roles or apprenticeships. Good ideas about making sure you research the company and the role to make your application specific were given. Also, students need to show evidence of their interests and skills to support their application, anything from showing good time management and responsibility whilst doing a paper round, relevant reading you have done or clubs or projects you have been involved in.

Clear information was given about GE's graduate apprenticeship scheme, what qualifications were required and what the course entails. Also more details were provided about the Edison graduate programme within GE which continues to train graduates in the specific area they are working in, for example learning about MRI scanners if working in the medical division.

This virtual activity gave students a real insight into GE and the different routes into STEM careers. More information at etrust.org.uk and jobs.gecareers.com.

The Royal Society of Chemistry Top of the Bench Quiz

Every year, the Royal Society of Chemistry runs a national competition for teams of Students in KS4. This year, the competition was taken online, providing challenging rounds based on General Chemistry Knowledge, Balancing Equations, Lego Scientists, Chemistry Dingbats and our favourite—Chemistry Explosions. Some of our best Chemists teamed together to complete the challenge. Well done to Emily Hays (Year 11), Jenny Hoyle (Year 10), Mya McVeigh-Judd (Year 9) and Antoni Cusworth (Year 9) for giving the quiz their best efforts. The team scored the highest out of all the schools in the Sheffield region and have qualified for the national competition in the spring.

Royal Society of Chemistry – Christmas Lecture

By Rebeka Brinkus, Year 12

Usually around this time every year, Sixth Form students have an opportunity to have an afternoon trip to one of Sheffield's universities to watch a lecture delivered by the Royal Society of Chemistry, but due to the current pandemic we had to stay in school for the lecture. Despite the differences this year, the students still had a great time taking part in a Christmas Chemistry quiz before the lecture and then learning about the Periodic Table of Elements in more detail, as well as learning more about the history of the University of Sheffield.

Tom Anderson, who delivered the lecture, delved into the background detail of the periodic table and where it all began, such as the first 4 'elements' being earth, water, air and fire and how these were then identified as not being pure elements, thus starting the discovery and refinement of the elements that can now be found on the periodic table. We were also shown the name origin for some of the more commonly known elements and where they were derived from – such as hydrogen being derived from ancient Greek and translating to the 'maker of water'. All this background knowledge gave us a great insight and deeper understanding of where the periodic table originated from and how it developed over time into the table that we all now know and love. The lecture also briefly covered atoms and their history of how they have been represented, with an explanation of the most accurate, yet arguably the most complex model of the atom and the electron orbitals that surround it.

This lecture can be talked about in students' personal statements, which makes the talk even more beneficial. It is a great opportunity for students to learn more about the subject they are taking and allow them to gain further knowledge on topics that they are studying.

Wath Academy Transition

YEAR 6 to YEAR 7 Transition Countdown

March	National Offer Day – 1 March 2021
June	Y6 Transition Week
August	Y6 Transition Day

A message from Mrs Gillatt

Dear Year 6 student,

It was an absolute pleasure meeting you at our Year 6 Open Evening in October. Thank you for using your Golden Ticket to have a spectacular tour of the academy.

We are waiting in eager anticipation for National Offer Day on 1 March. The Transition Team at Wath Academy are busy planning activities and events we would like to invite you to in the months ahead.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy reading the *Torch* student newspaper produced by students at Wath Academy to find out what has been going on.

Please remember to get in touch if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Gillatt

Year 6-7 Transition Lead



Wath Academy

Delivering exceptional learning experiences that enable all young people to thrive in a competitive world and lead successful and fulfilling lives



Our Key Drivers

World-class learning

World-class learning every lesson, every day

The highest expectations

Everyone can be successful; always expect the highest standards

No excuses

Create solutions not excuses; make positive thinking a habit

Growth mindset

Believe you can improve; work hard and value feedback

Never give up

Resilience is essential; be relentless in the pursuit of excellence

Everyone is valued

Diversity is celebrated; see the best in everyone

Integrity

Be trustworthy and honest; deliver on promises and walk the talk

Year 6 Key Driver Competition

This competition is open to all Year 6 students!

To take part you need to:

Select one of the 'Key Drivers' e.g. 'Never give up'.

Create a poster with pictures that illustrate the 'Key Driver' you have selected.

Email enquiries@wathacademy.com with a photo of your poster or attach an electronic copy. Don't forget to include your name and primary school.

Entries must be received by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

Three winners will be chosen.

All entries will be entered into a prize draw.

Updates from Wath Academy

Sixth Form Transition

By Euan Mcginness, Year 12

Transition to the Sixth Form this year has definitely been different, but despite the many changes, the KS5 team were here to make it as comfortable as possible.

Doing a full course of three subjects that you have the freedom to choose means you can fulfil the needs for your career path! With smaller class sizes, it's easy for focused learning; teachers have the time and flexibility to provide and ensure that you feel confident in what you're learning.

In the Sixth Form, you can follow your own structure and plan your own time. By organising yourself, it's a great experience as learning can be efficient, all whilst backed and with the help of the Sixth Form team at any point.

You have the opportunity to meet new people and will see that anybody can fit in, you will find people with similar interests and hobbies; it's a genuinely positive place, especially with the Study Area where people are encouraged to socialise, study and share experiences. At no point have I questioned myself why I came, I wouldn't change my mind to go elsewhere and I would highly recommend Wath Sixth Form as for the quality of learning and environment that is bursting with opportunities!

From the Perspective of Staff: Why Growth Mindset Matters

By Em Rodgers, Year 9

As having a Growth Mindset is such a vital part of education and life in general, I decided it would be a good idea to interview some other people who are vital to education – my teachers. I hoped that they would have some opinions on the subject, so I asked three of them the same set of questions to see what their answers were.

Miss Clarke – Drama

Miss Clarke believes that Growth Mindsets are very important, as they encourage people to try to do their best and to always strive to get better.

She views herself as having a Growth Mindset. She told us about how her first year of teaching was a shock, as she didn't think she was going to be able to succeed in the school. However, she persevered and learned that she could, which was a dramatic and much-needed boost to her confidence.

Her advice to students who want to change their mindset is to know that it is okay to make mistakes and that they only help you to get better in the long term.

Mr Davies – Spanish

Mr Davies also feels a Growth Mindset is important as it will help you learn from your mistakes and improve yourself overall. He would like to think that he has a Growth Mindset, which he particularly demonstrated when he was learning to speak Russian. In his first semester assessment, he did badly, but after taking advice given to him working very hard, he received the best mark in class for the second semester assessment.

His advice to students to improve their mindset is to always remember to believe in yourself and know that every mistake you make only contributes to your success in the future.

Mrs Thompson – English

Mrs Thompson feels that having a Growth Mindset is vital to make sure you embrace all opportunities and become the best you can be. She also believes she has a Growth Mindset, saying that a teacher must constantly deal with taking on feedback and trying to learn or improve the way you teach. She told us that having her little boy, Kit, and learning how to be a mum, has meant learning how to adapt quickly to a lot of changes in the way she does things in her life and at home.

Her advice to students who want to change their mindset is by engaging with the Character Education sessions they have the chance to partake in in the mornings. As well as this, you should try talking to others or making new friends. You never know what new people could teach you.

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Seasonal Specials

Santa Claus and his Outfit

By Ruby Leach, Year 7

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Who is Santa Claus?

Santa Claus, also known as Father Christmas, Saint Nicholas, Saint Nick, Kris Kringle, or simply Santa, is a legendary character, originating in Western Christian culture, who is said to bring gifts to the homes of well-behaved children on the night of Christmas Eve (24th December) or during the early morning hours of Christmas Day (25th December).

What does Santa Claus do?

On 24th December or that night, Santa (Father Christmas) comes to everyone's house and give them presents...but only if they are asleep and have behaved well throughout the year!

What was the colour of Santa's first suit?

In 1880s, Santa was depicted in a green or tan suit. Thomas Nast, a German-born American caricaturist, is often attributed with the creation of the modern American version of Santa's suit. His cartoon about Santa Claus and Christmas featured in *Harper's Weekly*, 1866.

What is Santa's favourite colour?

Santa Claus's favourite colour is not red, nor does he much like velvet. It's just all they had when he ordered the suit, and though he's tried to get a nice three piece blue pinstripe number, we all know how his publicist feels about change. Santa's wife, Mrs. Claus, resents being portrayed as grandmotherly in the media.

DIY Christmas Decorations

By Millie O'Brien, Year 7

As we all know, Christmas is going to be a bit different this year and people may be a bit down in the dumps. It's horrible when you see somebody sad, especially around the festive period, so here are a few crafts that you can give to people to cheer them up. If you want, you can give these as presents or just make them for yourself.

Salt dough decorations

These decorations are super easy to make. You just need 250 grams of plain flour, 125 grams of salt and 125 millilitres of water. First, add your flour and salt to a large mixing bowl. Secondly, slowly add the water bit by bit; you may need a bit more than measured. Mix together until combined, adding more of each ingredient if needed. When you cut out your desired shapes, make sure your surface is floured and dough is rolled about 1 cm thick. Place your salt dough creations on a baking tray covered in baking paper. Bake on a low heat in an oven for 3 hours and you're done, and you can paint them if you want to.

Pompom Wreath

Pompoms are really easy to make. You can buy kits really cheaply online and you can even make one on a fork; there are lots of YouTube videos to help. Once you've mastered them, make them in multiple colours and sizes. Cardboard is the best to make the base of the wreath. Cut out a large circle and cut out the middle with a circular hole. Make sure you leave enough room to stick your pompoms on. Hot glue is best to stick the pompoms to the cardboard, but any type works. Fill in all the gaps and you're done!

Crochet

Crochet is a really good thing to get into as you can make anything with it. General blankets make great present and are easy to get the hang of (check out this [YouTube video](#)). Christmas designs are the best, though, and once you have mastered the blanket you can make a snowflake in minutes ([watch here!](#)). [Snowmen](#) and [reindeer](#) are hard but by next Christmas you'll be a pro and know how to make them. Click the links to see tutorials for each festive design!

A Little Festive Cheer

The Not-So-Horrible History of... Christmas Trees

Abigail Germany, Year 9

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imposing hawk and wore the Sun as a jewel in his crown. Exactly like the ancient folk, they reckoned that the God became sick in the winter and that he recovered in the solstice. Yet, one different aspect is that they celebrated life over death.

The Romans had a lavish feast known as Saturnalia to show esteem to Saturn, God of Agriculture. They looked forward to harvest and healthy vegetation and therefore filled their homes with twinkling trees.

When we think about the more modern history of this topic, 16th century Germany is the first thing that comes to mind. Christians from the country adorned their evergreens and often built pyramids out of wood and trimmed them with candles and other ornaments.

Christmas trees didn't come to England for a very long time after the tradition started in Germany. It was the same scenario in America; many Christians were very strict and considered decorating trees to be an 'oddity' and 'mockery.'

Nonetheless, in 1864, Queen Victoria and her husband, the German, Prince Albert were drawn as stood around a Christmas tree. This led to a huge frenzy of popularity in England and other countries! As a German, the concept of these important trees was ritual to Albert and his marriage to Victoria meant that he could share his notions with our country!

Now, we can't even imagine Christmas without excessively garnished fir trees!

Christmas trees have been a prevailing tradition for longer than we can remember. However, so few of us actually know where they originated from and why!

As everyone knows, Christmas is the time of year when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the son of God. It would be expected to assume that the fir trees we put up in our homes to be symbolic of that. Quite strikingly, evergreens had an important meaning in the winter before the ideology of Christianity!

According to different time periods, there are different motivations for erecting the heavily embellished trees. For example, people from the ancient times believed that the sun was a god and that the coming of winter meant he was becoming fatigued. They commemorated the period we call Christmas because they thought it meant the Sun God's health was being restored.

Ancient Egyptians had a very parallel belief. Their God of the Sun was entitled Ra and he had the head of an

THE TORCH Journalists

This edition was produced by Millie O'Brien, Ruby Leach, Igrayne Whitelam, Molly Harper, Anwen Browne, Amelia Radojevich, Isobel Clowrey, Emily Rodgers, Isobelle Fenton, Alex Cook, Abigail Germany, Aidan Jennings, Grace Clowrey, Laura Rodgers, Emily Balaiss and Miss Taylor.

Thanks also to Evie Scholes, Rebeka Brinkus, Euan Mcginness, Miss Taylor, Mr Bishop and Miss Perry and all the other unsung staff members who help to contribute each edition.

If you are interested in helping to produce THE TORCH, please find Miss Taylor in F30 to be added to the Satchel:One group!

Wath Academy Remembers

Igrayne Whitelam Year7

We all know Remembrance Sunday celebrates the victory of the war ending and the defeat of fascist regimes, but what do we not know about Remembrance Sunday? Here are five lesser known facts about Remembrance Sunday:

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(Duke of Wellingtons Regiment preparing for Iraq war 2003)

1. While the armistice that ended World War I was signed at 5am on November 11, 1918, the formal agreement did not take effect until six hours later. The fighting officially stopped along the Western Front at 11am.
2. Queen Elizabeth II lit the eternal flame at the dedication ceremony on February 28, 1954. The flame, which burns continuously, is meant to represent eternal life. the flame is kept burning through a permanent supply of gas.
3. The eternal flame has had a few hiccups since it was first lit in 1954.
4. A man used a fire extinguisher to douse the flames in 2011 and 2012. Vandals used beer to snuff out the flames in 2006. Periods of high winds and heavy rain have also been known to extinguish the eternal flame on occasion, including in the early 1990s during an Anzac Day service. The Shrine and its surroundings are protected under the Shrine of Remembrance Act, which makes it an offence to extinguish the flame.
5. The Ode of Remembrance, the fourth stanza of Laurence Binyon's poem For the Fallen, is written on the metal wall panels of the Shrine's student-entry courtyard in Morse code:

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.

The ode was chosen because its reference to the youth of the soldiers was thought to be significant for students.

Remembrance Day at Wath Academy

On 11th November, all students at began the day with an assembly about the importance of remembering those who make sacrifices for us, which also featured the reading of a poem about Remembrance.

Learning paused at 11am for a two minute silence, where all students across the academy stood as a mark of respect. Students were given the opportunity for private reflection and silent thanks to all the brave sacrifices made by soldiers and others across the years. Students also listened to a video with the mournful rendition of The Last Post.

In addition to this, students were encouraged to get involved in order to create a Armistice Day display (shown in the images below).

Students were encouraged write a message of thanks on a Remembrance cross. These were then collected and placed in rows on the grass outside the academy's reception as a mark of respect for all those who have given their lives across the years for peace.



News, Politics and Opinion

US Election: What happens next?

Laura Rodgers, Year 13

The recent US election has provided both a welcome distraction from the constant barrage of Covid-19 related news, and an additional source of stress for many people.

The current leadership have been in power for four long years, spreading division, misinformation and hatred wherever they went. Trump's loyal followers have become some of the most dedicated political fanatics seen in recent history and their unwavering commitment is both shocking and worrying when considering the power of high voter turnout.

Despite their stalwart support, Trump and Pence lost the November election to democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and his vice president Kamala Harris. Biden took the electoral college with 306 electoral votes to Trump's 232, which in terms of individual votes was 81,255,933 of the total 158,155,083 votes, or 51.4%. Trump managed to win 74,196,153 votes which was 46.9% of the total, but the winner of the election is dictated by electoral college votes which are presented to the election winner in each state.

The number of electoral seats in each state is approximated based on the size of its population. Each state gets as many electors as it has lawmakers in the US Congress. There are 538 electors in total. Each elector represents one electoral vote, and a candidate needs to gain a majority of the votes - 270 or more – to be declared president elect of the United States of America.

So, Biden has won the election, what now? Well, there was some initial pushback from the Trump administration over the presidential handover, and many people feared that he would refuse to leave office altogether, instead enacting what would be essentially a dictatorship. But despite some slightly worrying press conferences and multiple failed lawsuits against various states for 'voter fraud' Trump has finally conceded the election and the presidential transition period has finally begun.

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will officially take office on the 20th of January 2021 at noon as is written in the Constitution, where they will be sworn in at an inauguration ceremony. Biden's transition team have

already started preparing in order to ensure the shift into power goes as smoothly as possible, gathering information on upcoming deadlines, current policy and governmental roles.

Why is any of this important? Contrary to popular belief, American politics does have a significant impact on the UK, and this election is no different. Britain often heavily relies on our 'special relationship' with the US and Brexit has increased our dependency on the US for trade tenfold.

However, Boris Johnson's and Joe Biden's politics do not match up particularly well, with Johnson instead aligning more closely with Trump's more conservative policies, which could put us at a huge disadvantage in trade talks and have devastating effects on our economy, especially if trade negotiations with the EU fail.

So, next time you say, 'It doesn't matter, we're not in America', just remember the 'special relationship', and that it might not be as simple as you first thought.

Boredom Busters

Amelia Radojevich, Year 8

Tired of having nowhere to go and nothing to do during the pandemic?

Here are five ways to beat the boredom blues:

1. Tidy up - it sounds boring but it takes up a lot of time and makes your room tidy.
2. Cook - cooking is very therapeutic and leaves you with a delicious meal.
3. Exercise - exercising keeps you fit and gives you things to do.
4. Hoovering - whether it be in the house or the car, everyone has a bit of mess and it's good to have a clear out.
5. Online shopping - it's great and you can also get some Christmas shopping done.

Remember, the current plan is to relax the rules over the festive period, meaning up to three households can bubble up. However, don't forget: the virus won't take the holiday off so ask yourself what you can do to stop infections spreading.



Review and Media



Pokémon Shield: is it the home console Pokémon we all wanted?

Aidan Jennings, Year 10

Every Pokémon fan has always wondered what a home console Pokémon game would be like. *Sword* and *Shield* finally give us this. The closest thing before these games were *Coliseum* and *DX*. Expectations were high so do they live up to them?

Negatives first and then positives. One of my biggest issues with the game is the online. While it works, and I haven't really had any connection issues, it is inconvenient to use, and is full of hackers. Whenever I trade with someone or battle someone, it is likely I will connect to a hacker. I can't even block hackers easily either, because of how the blocking system works.

Next, the graphics. I'm not going to say too much here about it other than the fact it does not in anyway look like a Switch game. Compare this to *Luigi's Mansion 3*, and Pokémon is completely blown out the water. The wild area is cool, but there isn't a lot to do there, meaning there is little reason to explore it. It is wasted potential in my opinion.

The game is also very stop-start in the story, making it frustrating at times. Speaking of the story, it is boring and lacklustre. If you've played through a Pokémon game before, you more or less know the story of this one (I will say that for as annoying as he is, Hop did have a fairly good arch, at least for Pokémon standards). The animations are also really boring. The ones in the wild area aren't too bad, but all of the other ones are. Some of the Pokémon are completely unbalanced, such as Dracovish, Zacian, and Zamazanta.

Positives. The new Pokémon are quite cool; my favourite one is probably Obstagoon. Dynamax is quite cool. It adds strategy to battles and is far more balanced than mega evolutions or z moves. The gigantamax Pokémon are really well designed, fun and rewarding to hunt for.

The battle tower is this generation's version of the battle frontier, or the battle tree, and is fun as always, if a little easy. It's especially easy if you have a stealth rock Pokémon on your team. The end game isn't great, but

not too bad either, just a little uninteresting. It's also cool how Pokémon can be seen walking around, and any HMs needed are in your bike, so you don't need a Pokémon with a tonne of HMs or need to constantly ride different Pokémon.

In conclusion, while I have some reservations about this game, I did enjoy it. It's far from perfect but not by any means bad. I give *Pokémon Sword* and *Shield* a 7/10.

Top Seven Songs To Pump You Up

Alex Cook, Year 9

'We Will Rock You' by Queen is a classic and will never fail to get you shouting the lyrics like a banshee. It is a song everyone knows and most people love with lyrics about a globalized future without instruments and rock rebels.

'Thunder' by Imagine Dragons will have you thunderin' for more. With its lyrics about what struggles the band had and how they achieved the long cherished goal of becoming a global music icon, the music turns out to be very heartfelt.

'My Songs Know What You Did in the Dark' by Fall Out Boy is such a great song and will get you chanting the lyrics. They seem to really love music, saying that music was what got them through the hard times.

'Welcome to the Black Parade' by My Chemical Romance is an old song, but good nonetheless. It is a reflection on life after death, giving the lyrics quite a powerful message.

'Emperor's New Clothes' by Panic! At The Disco has a great beat and the lyrics are really cool too! It shows how people copy the beliefs of others just because they are rich or powerful, and shows how sometimes that can be dangerous.

'Fight Song' by Rachel Platten is a really empowering piece of music. It was written from her struggles of many different experiences and how they were hurting her, but she remembered to believe in herself and get through it.

'Happy Pills' by Weathers is a really nice bit of music about doing what's best for you and how an individual's sense of incompleteness can just be a silly haze.



Review and Media



Sir Sean Connery: A Tribute to a Legend

By Emily Balaiss, Year 13

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2020 has been a devastating year for everyone across the globe. We have experienced something like never before, where the whole world was shut down due the Coronavirus pandemic, and in Britain especially, we've experienced major economic and unemployment meltdowns. But, one of the most shocking things to come out of 2020 (other than the Covid-19 pandemic) was the death of *James Bond* star, Sir Sean Connery. Connery was the first actor to bring the fictional character of James Bond to life on the big screen. He was the most universally known actor to bring the widely popular 70 year-old franchise.

Fellow actor Harrison Ford paid tribute to his "dear friend". Ford performed with Connery in Steven Spielberg's 1989 film *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade*, with Connery playing the father Henry Jones to Ford's Indiana Jones. *Bond* Producers Michael G Wilson and Barbara Broccoli also paid tribute to the screen legend saying: "He was and shall always be remembered as the original James Bond whose indelible entrance into cinema history began when he announced those unforgettable words 'The name's Bond... James Bond'." First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon explained how she was "heartbroken [...] our nation mourns one of her best loved sons". Fellow Bond actor, Pierce Brosnan defined Sir Sean as "one of the true greats of cinema".

Connery will be greatly missed by everyone he worked with and inspired whilst on the big screen. R.I.P.

Best Presents to Buy for Secondary School Kids

Anwen Browne, Year 7

Top five best things to get secondary school boys for Christmas (budget £100):

1. Video games or consoles
2. Wireless headphones
3. Sports clothes such as Adidas, Nike etc.
4. Accessories for game consoles or phones
5. Leather wallets or wrist watches

Top five best things to get secondary school girls for Christmas (budget £100):

1. Customized gifts, such as flasks, phone cases, pillows, etc.
2. Make-up
3. Accessories, handbags, jewellery, etc.
4. Portable chargers
5. Clothing such as jeans, t-shirts, boots, trainers etc.

Best things for all secondary students (budget £100):

1. LED lights
2. Sports equipment
3. Gift cards for games, shops, restaurants, etc.
4. Smartphone projector
5. Laptop or tablet
6. Streaming TV subscription
7. Books
8. Computer games
9. DVDs and Blu-Rays
10. TV boxsets
11. Experience days
12. Household gadgets
13. Card and board games

Feature: Urban Legends

Isabelle Fenton, Year 9

The black-eyed children are an urban legend that began in Texas, but has spread even to England. It tells of two young children who arrive around midnight, alone, and knock on the door. The origin story was by Brian Bethel, who reported it to have happened in Abilene, Texas, in the car park of a movie theatre. Two children, around 10 and 14 years old, approached him. He was in his car, and rolled the window down. They asked him to let them into

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Creative Corner

Remembrance Poem: Competition Winner

By Evie Scholes, Year 7

On the 11th of the 11th every year,
We commemorate those that delivered in a time of
such fear.

The tribe of brave heroes that fought in the war.

We still admire them today in awe.

For all they did,

We should never forget,

Especially the ones whose lives were upset.

When they got the news that their loved ones had
passed,

It left a bruise that would forever last.

They saved so many, making the future great,

And even now we all celebrate

the date.

The date the guns fell silent,

All the countries stopped being violent.

Planes stopped soaring in the sky,

Sirens halted their alarming cry.

This year marks 75 years since the war died,

This year we shall remember the time with such
pride.

the car, and take them home. They wanted to get some money they forgot, so they could get a ticket. Somehow, he knew he was in danger around these children, and he refused. The children began to become aggressive and Bethel drove off, escaping unharmed.

Other stories report the children knocking on the door of their house, and they ask to come in, either for a phone call or a drink. They usually appear in a pair, wearing clothes people wouldn't wear anymore. They are usually around 8-16 years old, and keep asking if you refuse, becoming more aggressive. They always seem to know what you think, and you become terrified, but when you leave, they disappear without a trace.

Any way they appear, you should never let them in, or they will begin to cause harm to you. One account described a victim who kept bleeding from their nose, and felt dizzy. When they went to the doctor, they were diagnosed with an aggressive skin cancer caused by overuse of tanning beds, though they had never used one.

There is debate as to what these strange children really are, or even if they exist or not. Some think they could be vampires, since they have soulless eyes. Some think they could be demons, since people who have seen them all agreed that an inexplicable fear took control over their body. Some even think that they are the ghosts of dead children, who have turned evil.

The only thing anyone agrees to is that you should never listen to their requests, just run, or your life may be in their hands.

Student Spotlight



Jemima J in Year 9 has certainly been setting herself the highest of expectations recently, particularly on the football field.

At the start of the season, Jemima was selected to represent South Yorkshire in the English Schools FA alongside Amber Sewell, which alone is an amazing achievement.

But she has continued to excel and last week, Jemima was selected as one of the top three footballers in her age group in the county.

Jemima has been chosen out of 100 fellow footballers to trial for



the English Schools' FA U15 girls team in the New Year. If successful, she will join a highly successful international squad.

This is an exceptional achievement and we wish her the very best of luck!

Book of the Month

Itch – by Simon Mayo

Reviewed by Grace Clowrey, Year 10



Itch: The explosive adventures of the element hunter is a gripping sci-fi novel, and the first in a three-book series by Simon Mayo.

Science-obsessed 14-year-old Itchingham Loft doesn't have a regular hobby – he collects elements from the Periodic table. And often blows things up. However, one day he finds himself with a mysterious rock; something no-one has ever seen before... Soon, he is on the run, trying to keep the rock out of the wrong hands – but what if there aren't any right ones? And how long can a science know-how really keep Itch alive if the whole world is searching for him?

I would highly recommend this exciting book, which is full of action, plot twists and daring escapes – and plenty of explosions. You'll be desperate to know what happens next! It is available online or in bookstores, and has recently been developed into a TV series, which can be found on BBC iPlayer. I hope that you will consider reading this book over the Christmas holidays!

Sport and House Update

LEWIS HAMILTON AND THE GRAND PRIX

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By Isobel Clowrey, Year 8

This seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton is currently suffering the effects of contracting the Coronavirus.

Hamilton missed his last race in Bahrain, due to the disease, but has now eventually tested negative and is now aiming for the Grand Prix.

He is to compete in the final Grand Prix in Abu Dhabi. Unfortunately, however, he states that, "I am not

100%." Hamilton is now competing against Valtteri Bottas and Max Verstappen.

The Grand Prix will be from 10th to 13th December. The actual race will take place on 13th December 2020, at (track time) 17:10 - 19:10, and (English/UK) 13:10 - 15:10. There has already been practice one, practice two, practice three and the qualifying.

We are awaiting the time for the race, and no-one is quite sure who will win.

