

# St Joseph's Journal

Faith  
Learning  
Respect



## Head's Message

Welcome to the first edition of Joe's Journal for this academic year. I am delighted to give you an update on some of the events which have been happening in the School.

It has been a pleasure to see the Year 7 students settle quickly into their new surroundings. I am also pleased to see new and returning students welcomed into Sixth Form. All year groups have had a positive start to the new term, responding well to the changes we have made, which has improved the school experience for all.

Our mission is to develop each child to be the best version of themselves. A wide range of activities have been undertaken by students already this year which aids them in this process. Thanks to the support of Fr Andrew Shaw and Fr Simon Weymes we have celebrated Mass with the Year 7s and Year 12s. We have also had opportunities to experience retreat at the Youth Village and have welcomed a wide variety of guest speakers including *Rev. Gavin Rushton from Hope Family Church in Washington* and *Fr Peter Stoddart from the Royal Navy*.

Ensuring that we can all live life to the full sometimes means tackling difficult challenges. For Year 11 and Year 13 their attention now turns to mock exams which are crucial in preparation for their GCSE and A Levels in the summer. I would like to wish them all the best in these assessments.

Students have represented the school in an exemplary manner in a range of activities both in the building and out in the wider locality. From experiencing *Wicked* at Sunderland Empire to hosting and winning a South Tyneside Table Tennis tournament, our pupils have truly been living out our FLAME values. The Year 6 Open Evening demonstrated this further with some amazing student volunteers giving up their time to showcase our brilliant learning community.

This week we were very proud to see St Joseph's as the top performing school in South Tyneside for student participation in Sport activities over the past year. I am certain we are on track to repeat this again.

The standards of uniform and behaviour throughout the first half-term have been very impressive. The challenge now is to maintain this moving forward.

# A Thrilling Half Term at the Science Club

This half term has been an exciting journey for our weekly science club, welcoming a fresh wave of enthusiastic new members while keeping some familiar faces to guide and mentor them. Together, we've embarked on a variety of hands-on experiments and engaging competitions that have sparked curiosity and fostered a love for science in both new and returning participants.

## **Week 1: The Wonders of Flame Tests**

We kicked off our first week with a classic experiment: flame tests. Students gathered around as we set up the Bunsen burners to observe the different colours produced when various substances are ignited. This hands-on activity allowed them to match the colours they saw with the corresponding ions in each substance, making chemistry both visual and interactive. The look of awe on their faces as bright reds, greens, and blues flickered in the flames was a testament to the wonder of scientific exploration.

## **Week 2: Balloon-Powered Buggy Competition**

In our second week, the atmosphere shifted from observation to competition as we held our first challenge of the year: balloon-powered buggies. Students worked in teams to design and build their own buggies using balloons, straws, and various materials. The excitement was palpable as they raced their creations down the hall, cheering each other on and learning valuable lessons in engineering and teamwork. This activity not only encouraged creativity but also highlighted the principles of physics in a fun and competitive environment.

## **Week 3: The Squeaky Pop of Hydrogen**

The following week, we took our scientific endeavours up a notch by testing for hydrogen gas. Students lit splints and listened intently for the distinctive squeaky pop that signifies the presence of hydrogen. This simple yet effective demonstration captivated the students and deepened their understanding of chemical reactions. It was thrilling to see their reactions as they realized the connection between the science they were learning and the real-world applications of these principles.

## **Week 4: Creating Lava Lamps**

Our fourth week brought a splash of colour and creativity as students crafted their own lava lamps using a mixture of acids and alkalis. Watching the colourful bubbles rise and fall was not only mesmerizing but also a fantastic way to learn about density and chemical reactions. This experiment encouraged students to think critically about the materials they were using and the science behind the reaction, enhancing their understanding of basic chemistry concepts.

## **Week 5: Launching Homemade Parachutes**

As we moved into the final weeks of the half term, students designed and launched homemade parachutes from the top floor of our building. This activity combined physics and engineering, as they had to consider factors like weight, surface area, and air resistance to create parachutes that would float gracefully to the ground. The excitement of watching their designs take flight was exhilarating, fostering a sense of accomplishment and collaboration among the students.

## **Looking Ahead: Wizz Bang Experiments!**

As we approach the last week of this vibrant half term, we're gearing up for a spectacular celebration of all the hard work and creativity the students have shown over the past six weeks. We'll be diving into some fan-favourite experiments, including elephant's toothpaste, woosh bottles, and methane bubbles. These "wizz bang" experiments promise to be not only educational but also incredibly entertaining, giving students a chance to see science in action in a dramatic and engaging way.



# Royal Navy Chaplain vocation talk

Welcome Fr. Peter Stoddart



Royal Navy Catholic Chaplain



On Monday 9th September 2024, we were blessed with a visit from Royal Navy Chaplain aka 'the Bish' from HMS Diamond, Fr. Peter Stoddart. Fr. Peter is a diocese of Hexham and Newcastle priest who has served in the Royal Navy for the past two years as a spiritual friend and advisor to all. He explored his vocation to the priesthood and to military chaplaincy and was interviewed by students about his life in the Royal Navy, his views of St. Thomas Aquinas' Just War theory and the morality of war. We are truly grateful to the Royal Navy Chaplains department for their constant support for our students. God bless.



# Y12 Welcome Mass

## Student reflection



On Friday 4th October 2024 Hilda House came together as a Sixth Form family to mark the start of their spiritual milestone in Year 12. The theme of the Mass was 'listening to God's call' and students reflected upon the importance of opening our hearts to hear what God is calling each of us to do.

The Mass was celebrated by Fr. Andrew Shaw who is the new priest for Jarrow and who has taken over pastoral responsibility for St. Joseph's Catholic Academy so we were absolutely thrilled to welcome him to our school family community too.

Students prepared for the Mass with dedication and commitment with their form tutors. Students wrote bidding prayers, practised readings and practised the hymns. Students prepared offertory banners and prayer chains based on St. Hilda which were brought up during the offertory.

Our Guild of St. Stephen from KS3 Altar served for the Mass too and undertook their liturgical ministry passionately. We were led in music by the incredible music department who played reflective music, led the hymns and even sang a beautiful rendition of Amazing Grace during the communion procession.

We are really grateful for the amazing spiritual support of Fr. Shaw and we look forward to working with him much more in the near future.

# Today in History

On Sunday 2 September 1666 a spark fell from a baker's oven after he had gone to bed and a fire started. The fire raged for four days straight and brought complete devastation to the city of London. This fire is now known as The Great Fire of London.



A third of the city had been destroyed, about 13,200 houses and 87 churches were burned to the ground, as well as famous buildings such as St Paul's Cathedral and The Royal Exchange. Surprisingly, only six official deaths were recorded...but the actual figure is likely to be much higher.



The Great Fire was an awful tragedy - but it did lead to some positive changes to London. The city was rebuilt in a safer and more organised way, buildings were made from brick or stone (rather than wood) and London's first fire brigades were formed to tackle any future blazes. The recovery of the city also saw the rise of a number of iconic buildings like St. Paul's Cathedral, which was redesigned by the famous architect Sir Christopher Wren.



## FLAME

# Today in History

For thirteen days in October 1962 the world waited—seemingly on the brink of nuclear war.

The Cuban missile crisis happened during the period known as the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was the closest the world had come to a nuclear war.



In 1959 communists took control of Cuba and formed an alliance with the Soviets. This alliance meant that the Soviets were able to place nuclear weapons on Cuba.

This was a huge threat to America. Cuba was only 90 miles from the coast of Florida, and many big US cities, like Washington DC and New York, would be within range. The government believed that the lives of 80 million Americans were in danger.



The President, John F. Kennedy, responded by imposing a naval blockade around Cuba to stop the Soviet ships suspected of carrying nuclear missiles from reaching Cuba.

When the blockade was in place Kennedy received a letter from the Soviets informing him that Soviet ships travelling to Cuba would ignore the blockade and force their way through. If they do the Americans will be forced to respond and this could start a nuclear war.

Neither side wanted to back down and the Soviet ships continued to sail towards Cuba. However, they stopped just short of the blockade. Nuclear war had been avoided!



# FLAME





# The Reading List

## Spooky Special



### Key Stage 3

- The Witches by Roald Dahl
- Goosebumps by R.L. Stein
- Small Spaces by Katherine Arden
- The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman
- A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness
- A Series of Unfortunate Events by Lemony Snicket
- Deep and Dark and Dangerous by Mary Downing Hahn
- The Thief of Always by Clive Barker
- The Spiderwick Chronicles by Tony DiTerlizzi



### Key Stage 4

- Something Wicked This Way Comes by Ray Bradbury
- Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
- House of Hollow by Krystal Sutherland
- Coraline by Neil Gaiman
- The Monstrumologist by Rick Yancey
- The Diviners by Libba Bray
- You're Not Supposed to Die Tonight by Kalynn Barron
- The Companion by Katie Alexander
- The Weight of Blood by Tiffany D. Jackson
- The Crimson Moth by Kristen Ciccarelli
- The Unfinished by Cheryl Isaacs



## Key Stage 5

**The Haunting of Hill House** by Shirley Jackson

**Rebecca** by Daphne Du Maurier

**Tender is the Flesh** by Agustina Bazterrica

**Helter Skelter** by Vincent Bugliosi

**The Butcher Boy** by Patrick McCabe

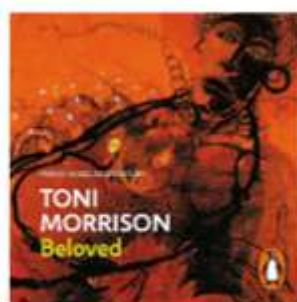
**Salem's Lot** by Stephen King

**Beloved** by Toni Morrison

**The Changeling** by Victor La Valle

**Lovecraft Country** by Matt Ruff

**Ghost Story** by Peter Straub



## Library Timetable

|                       | Monday                                  | Tuesday                                    | Wednesday                                  | Thursday                                   | Friday                                  |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| 8.15 -8.30            | Choose a book/read/ homework            | Choose a book/read/ homework               | Choose a book/read/ homework               | Choose a book/read/ homework               | Choose a book/read/ homework            |
| Break                 | Choose a book/ literacy/ library events | Choose a book/ literacy /library events    | Choose a book/ literacy/ library events    | Choose a book/ literacy/ library events    | Choose a book/ literacy/ library events |
| First Lunch           | Year 11 Study                           | Year 11 Study                              | Sparx Reader                               | Sparx Reader                               | Sparx Reader                            |
| Second Lunch          | Reading/study/ homework                 | Reading/study/ homework                    | Sparx Reader                               | Sparx Reader                               | Sparx Reader                            |
| After school 3.05-4pm |   | Revision/home work club (including Sparx). | Revision/home work club (including Sparx). | Revision/home work club (Including Sparx). |   |



# The Book Review (KS5)

## House of Leaves by Mark Z. Danielewski

This is possibly the most intimidating book I've ever read. Sitting comfortably close to 700 pages, a flick through will invoke an audible exclamation of confusion or annoyance. Either would be perfectly reasonable.

House of Leaves is arguably the most famous example of **ergodic literature**. From the Greek words ergon (work) and hodos (path), and ergodic book is one that requires genuine effort and mental, sometimes physical, labour to traverse. Some extracts are written , , or ~~struck out altogether~~. Sometimes the footnotes are longer than the chapter itself, and other times there may be a single word or number on each page. Blue words mean something, red means something else, and if you figure out what that something is please let me know. If it sounds like a lot of effort and a tad pretentious that's exactly what it is, but in my opinion the story compliments the complexities and more than makes up for it. Without revealing too much, if anything at all, it is a novel about a story about a manuscript about a movie about a house. Bear with me. As a young family moves into their new home on Ash Tree Lane, the realisation that the house isn't exactly as it appears on the outside has dire consequences for an increasingly complex web of characters and unfortunate souls that find themselves unable to escape, including an award-winning photojournalist and an elusive old man. I like a good scary story and I found this to be up there near the top of my list. As I say, the format is meant to be confusing and some parts are designed even not to be read, but I found once I wrapped my head around that fact then it was quite enjoyable to follow the tangents and unrelenting footnotes, knowing that not everything has to make sense, some things aren't meant to, and ultimately, some things are best left alone.

Read it and be changed. **It doesn't happen immediately. You'll finish the book and that will be that, until a moment will come, maybe in a month, maybe a year, maybe even several years. You'll be sick or feeling troubled or deeply in love or quietly uncertain or even content for the first time in your life. It won't matter. Out of the blue, beyond any cause you can trace, you'll suddenly realize things are not how you perceived them to be at all. For some reason, you will no longer be the person you believed you once were. You'll detect slow and subtle shifts going on all around you, more importantly shifts in you. Worse, you'll realize it's always been shifting, like a shimmer of sorts, a vast shimmer, only dark like a room. But you won't understand why or how. You'll have forgotten what granted you this awareness in the first place. You might try then, as I did, to find a sky so full of stars it will blind you again. Only no sky can blind you now. Even with all that iridescent magic up there, your eye will no longer linger on the light, it will no longer trace constellations. You'll care only about the darkness and you'll watch it for hours, for days, maybe even for years. It will get so bad you'll be afraid to look away, you'll be afraid to sleep. Then no matter where you are, in a crowded restaurant or on some desolate street or even in the comforts of your own home, you'll watch yourself dismantle every assurance you ever lived by. You'll stand aside as a great complexity intrudes, tearing apart, piece by piece, all of your carefully conceived denials, whether deliberate or unconscious. And then for better or worse you'll turn, unable to resist, though try to resist you still will, fighting with everything you've got not to face the thing you most dread, what is now, what will be, what has always come before, the creature you truly are, the creature we all are, buried in the nameless black of a name.**

**And then the nightmares will begin.**

**Mark Z. Danielewski, House of Leaves, xxiii**

Or don't read it. Up to you. Maybe don't actually.

**Mr Johnson, Librarian at St Joseph's**

# Sparx reader

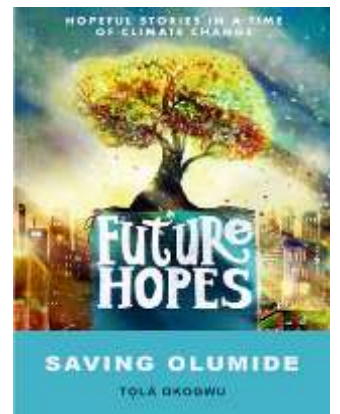
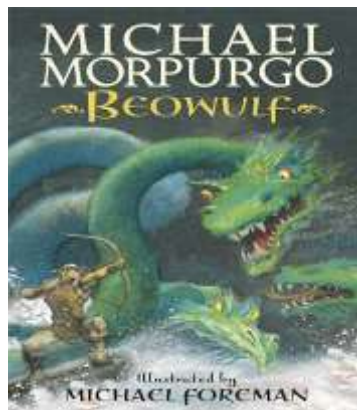
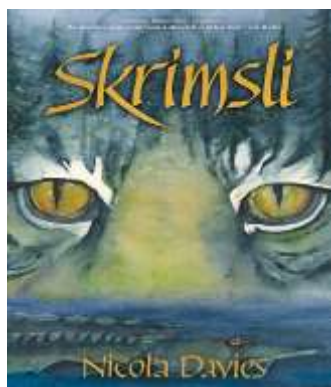
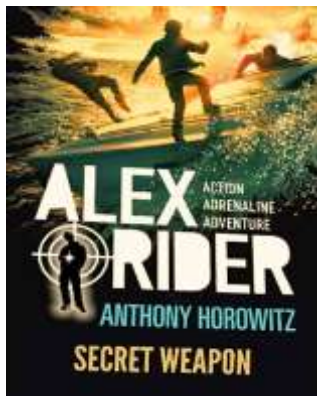
## Sparx Reader Update October 2024

**790 books read so far!**

We have now expanded Sparx Reader to our year 8 and 9 cohorts. We have been impressed by the amazing reading that our students have completed already this term. We know that reading fiction has so many amazing benefits, from improved empathy and understanding of the world, to improved vocabulary and academic success! It is truly wonderful to hear the excited discussion of the books that our students are reading and sharing with each other.

Our librarian, Mr Johnson, and a team of staff continue to support students with their reading daily. We offer students the opportunity to read in the library at lunch times on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Friday and after school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Parents are sent weekly emails from Sparx, sharing your child's successes. Please celebrate and ask questions about the books that your children are reading as we know that this helps with motivation for reading.



Well done to the following who have who have earned the most reading points out of their year group by going above and beyond in their reading:

### Year 7

Fraser Deavin  
Riley Anthony  
Sarah Eby  
Matthew Crawford  
Dylan Younger  
Zach Cross  
Sofia Korol  
Lauren Smith  
Ruby Riley  
Layla Balai

### Year 8

Charlotte Martin  
Molly Hawksfield  
Ethan Bannon  
Chloe Charlton  
Ashlyn More  
Rosie Shuker  
Rachael Nwokobia  
Amelia Bell  
Joss Broadbridge  
Callum Rae

### Year 9

Alfie Reay  
Fianna Bell  
Gloria Egwea  
Lucy Leonard  
Chloe Lowery  
Olivia Harvey  
Faye Henderson  
Mia Wilkinson  
Lewis Grimmer  
Julia Sobala

Congratulations to the following classes who have achieved the most reading points out of all the classes in their year group: 7Y2, 8X1 and 9X2.



# Sixth Form Artists Illuminate the School with a Stunning Textural Painting

In a wonderful display of creativity and collaboration, our Year 12 and 13 artists recently created an impressive textural painting that will grace the halls of our school. This artistic endeavor took place during the Year 6 Open Day, providing a perfect opportunity for our senior students to showcase their skills while also engaging with the younger members of our school community.

The painting is not just a visual spectacle; it reflects the passion and talent of our sixth form artists, who dedicated their time and energy to bring this piece to life. As they worked together, they transformed a blank canvas into a vibrant expression of creativity, demonstrating how art can shape and enhance our environment.

Mrs. Crombie, who oversees the art department, shared her enthusiasm for the project: "It's great to see our students shaping their environment by creating artwork for display in school. Collaborating creatively and sharing their gifts and talents is what makes our school community so special."

The painting serves as a reminder of the importance of artistic expression and the impact it can have on a shared space. It not only beautifies the school but also inspires younger students to appreciate the arts and perhaps explore their own creative paths in the future.

This collaborative effort exemplifies the spirit of our school, where students support and uplift each other while making lasting contributions to our community. We look forward to seeing how this stunning artwork will resonate with everyone who walks through our halls, serving as a beacon of creativity and inspiration.



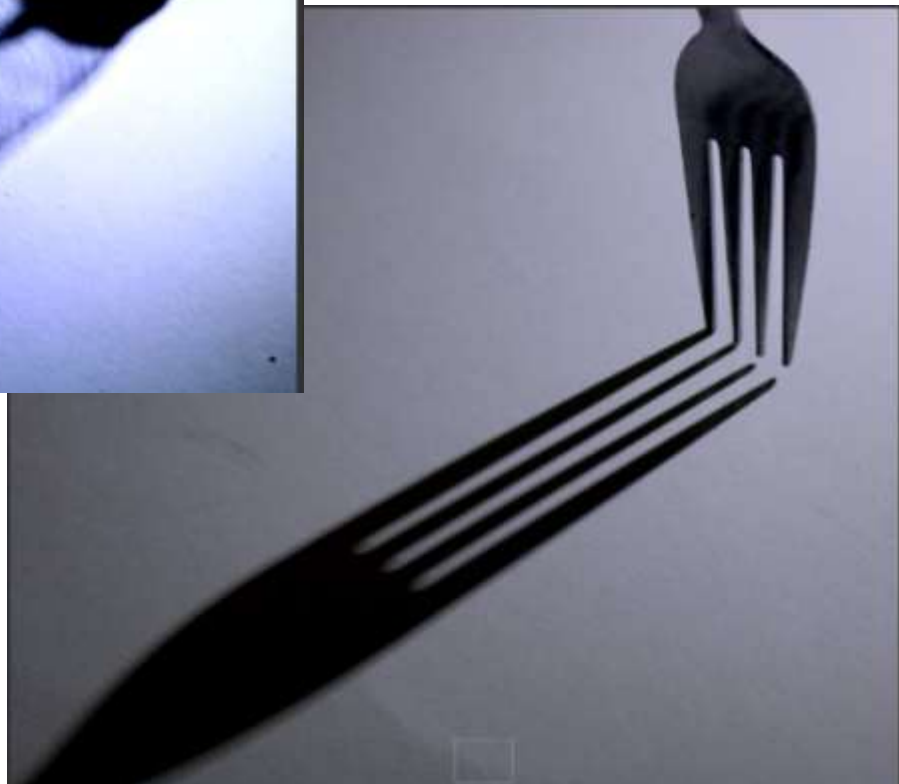
# Beautiful GCSE Photography Work by Colin Christie

We are thrilled to showcase the stunning GCSE photography work of Colin Christie, who has been diligently exploring lighting techniques in his Still Life Photography Project. Colin's keen eye for detail and innovative approach have resulted in a series of striking images that transform everyday objects into extraordinary pieces of art.

Through the thoughtful use of both warm and cool lighting, Colin has masterfully manipulated shadows and highlights, altering the mood and atmosphere of each photograph. This exploration not only enhances the visual appeal of the objects but also invites viewers to appreciate the beauty found in the mundane.

Colin's work exemplifies the power of photography to elevate simple subjects into captivating compositions. By experimenting with light, he has created a sense of depth and emotion that resonates in each image, encouraging us to see familiar items in a new light.

As we celebrate Colin's achievements, we can all agree that he has truly created beauty in the everyday. His dedication and creativity are an inspiration to fellow students and a testament to the transformative nature of art. We look forward to seeing more of Colin's work as he continues to develop his skills and artistic vision in the future!



# Sports Corner

## Year 9 football team

A successful start to the season for our Year 9 football team who have won 2 league games and are through to both the South Tyneside and County Cup second rounds. Well done gents and good luck for the rest of the season!



## U16 and South Tyneside table tennis competition

There has been some great table tennis on show at both our U13 and U16 events this half term. The U16 event took place at St Joseph's with both teams finishing on the podium. One of the St Joseph's teams came in joint 3rd place while the other managed to clinch the South Tyneside title.



## U13 Boys South Tyneside Table Tennis Competition

A great night at the U13 Boys South Tyneside Table Tennis Competition. Some brilliant skills on display and a really enjoyable night for all involved. A 3rd and 4th place finish for our teams who were pipped to the title by 2 very talented Whitburn teams. Well done boys!

# The magpiesview [youtube,tiktok,instigram]

## A Memorable Derby Day: SAFC Women vs. NUFC Women

Last weekend marked a rather bleak period in football with a two-week international break, yet women's football continued undeterred, contrasting sharply with the men's game. Among the matches, one stood out: the derby clash between Sunderland AFC Women and Newcastle United Women. I couldn't let a weekend go by without sporting entertainment, so I bought my ticket, albeit with some apprehension.

My memories of the Tyne-Wear derby date back to March 2016 when I attended my first match at just six years old. I vividly recall Aleksandar Mitrović's gunning celebration towards Sunderland fans in the Leazes End, followed by the chaos of fans rioting on Tyneside. That day opened my eyes to the intense rivalry that defines derby matches for both players and supporters.

As I set off towards the Stadium of Light, I was filled with a mix of excitement and nervousness. Friends sent me WhatsApp messages urging me to stay safe, emphasizing the dangers of derby day. Upon arriving at the stadium, I was surprised to see fans from both sides mingling—a sight I never expected. At the ground, there was just one police van and a mere six officers, compared to the 600 deployed during the men's game in January. This unexpected atmosphere put me at ease.

With my tripod in tow, I began my usual routine of fan interviews, anticipating some banter from Sunderland supporters. To my surprise, I ended up interviewing four Newcastle fans before speaking to any Sunderland supporters. While the rivalry was palpable, it seemed toned down compared to previous men's derby days.

As I scanned my ticket and entered the Stadium of Light for the first time, I noticed a small metal barrier that could easily be crossed—another indication of the comparatively low risk associated with this fixture. The seating area lacked segregation, and throughout the match, everything remained calm.

The game kicked off with an electric atmosphere, and it didn't take long for the excitement to build. Beth Lumsden scored for Newcastle, sending their fans into a frenzy just 28 minutes in. Shortly into the second half, she added another goal, followed by an unfortunate own goal from Sunderland. Despite the referee adding seven minutes of extra time, Sunderland couldn't find an equalizer.

As the final whistle blew, jubilation erupted among the 4,000 Newcastle fans in attendance. The players came over to greet supporters, sign autographs, and take photos—an interaction that seems increasingly rare in men's football. They even captured a memorable team photo with fans, reminiscent of the iconic image taken with Eddie Howe's squad last January.

This match positively transformed my perspective on women's football, showcasing a fantastic atmosphere filled with chants and support. It was a far cry from the chaotic rivalries I had come to expect. I left the stadium feeling inspired and eager to attend another Newcastle Women's match this season.

For all the latest updates on Newcastle United, be sure to scan the QR code above



**By Joe Mckenzie Howorth**

**Year 11**

# St. Joseph's Academy Students Shine on Residential Trip to Youth Village

On October 14th, 47 Year 7 students from St. Joseph's Academy embarked on an enriching residential trip to Youth Village in Consett, accompanied by dedicated staff members Mrs. Visram, Mr. Jobe, and Mr. Coleman. This trip, lasting a total of two nights, aimed to provide students with a unique opportunity for personal growth, team building, and reflection in a supportive environment.

## Engaging Activities Foster Growth

During their time at Youth Village, students participated in a wide range of activities designed to encourage faith, reflection, group work, and critical thinking. From team-building exercises to reflective discussions, each activity was carefully crafted to challenge the students both individually and collectively. This immersive experience allowed them to step outside their comfort zones, fostering resilience and cooperation among peers.

One of the highlights of the trip was the focus on developing critical thinking skills. Students engaged in thought-provoking workshops that encouraged them to explore their beliefs and values, while also considering different perspectives. These activities not only strengthened their understanding of key concepts but also helped them build confidence in expressing their thoughts and ideas.

## A Positive Representation of St. Joseph's Academy

Throughout the trip, the students exemplified the core values of St. Joseph's Academy. Their behaviour and attitude were commendable, leaving a lasting impression on the staff at Youth Village. Many commented on how polite, respectful, and engaged the students were, praising their ability to interact positively with both peers and staff.

Mrs. Visram, one of the accompanying teachers, expressed her pride in the students' conduct: "It's wonderful to see our students not only embracing the activities but also representing our academy so positively. Their respect for others and willingness to engage made this trip a success."

## Memorable Experiences and Lasting Bonds

In addition to the educational components, the trip also provided opportunities for students to forge lasting friendships. By participating in group activities, they learned the importance of teamwork and collaboration, building bonds that will extend beyond the classroom. The shared experiences of overcoming challenges together created a sense of camaraderie among the students.

As the trip came to an end, students returned home not only with memories of fun and adventure but also with a deeper understanding of themselves and each other. Many expressed gratitude for the experience, noting how it had inspired them to think more critically about their beliefs and the world around them.

## Conclusion: A Successful and Inspiring Journey

The residential trip to Youth Village was a resounding success, providing Year 7 students at St. Joseph's Academy with an invaluable opportunity for growth and reflection. With their exemplary behaviour and positive spirit, the students showcased the values of their academy and left a meaningful impression on all who were involved.





# ICT & Computing

**Digital Graphics** - Year 7 and 8 students are using Inkscape to develop a range of digital graphics related to Halloween.

