

Autumn 2011 Issue 16

# The Messenger

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF THORNTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL,  
A SPECIALIST SPORTS, SCIENCE AND APPLIED LEARNING TRUST SCHOOL



Thornton Grammar School – A Specialist Sports,  
Science and Applied Learning Trust School  
Leavenhorpe Lane, Thornton, Bradford BD13 3BH  
Tel: 01274 881082 Fax: 01274 814871  
[www.tgsonline.co.uk](http://www.tgsonline.co.uk)

Editorial Co-ordinator: Andy Halliley.

Produced by Words&Pictures Tel: 01943 854800

# KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK



**WELCOME** to the latest, autumn edition of *The Messenger*.  
 I am sure that everyone will now be settled back into school and working hard to fulfil their potential. This will be the case particularly for those students who are getting ready to take examinations. They will be studying hard to exceed the record-breaking achievements of students this year, of whom we are all so proud.  
 It is good to see so many Sixth Formers making such an excellent start to their Post 16 studies, as well as the contribution to school life already being made by our new arrivals in Year 7.  
 Chris Sampson, Headteacher

Valuable contribution: Headteacher Chris Sampson with Year 7 pupils Thomas Sheppard and Mihir Joshi, Year 8.

## Awais excels with our support

FORMER student Awais Mahmood finished Thornton Grammar Sixth Form in May, achieving grades A\*BCC. He is now pursuing a degree in Computer Science at university. However, his success did not come without considerable difficulty, and a huge amount of determination.

Awais has hemiplegia, which means that he is paralysed down one side of his body, and this made school more challenging for him.

"I found it difficult to move around school and to take notes in class," said Awais. "Without the help I received from staff at school, I would not be where I am today." However, Awais didn't let his disability hold him back. "I enjoyed going to the library and reading books," he recalled. "I went to violin lessons and the Dr Who club, and I liked going to the gym and being part of the school council."

University undergraduate: Awais Mahmood.



## PCs help pupils stay safe

PC Amanda Melbardis, who is a Safer Schools police officer, is in school every Friday morning to help both the school and pupils with any problems that may arise during the school day, and beyond.

PC Garry Stevens and a group of Year 9 pupils are also exploring crime, the law and preventing young people from getting caught up in criminal and antisocial behaviour.



## YEAR 7 RESIDENTIAL

THE twelfth annual Year 7 outdoors activities visit to Ingleborough Hall in Clapham was, once again, a fantastic experience for both staff and pupils, who spent three days and two nights away from home.

The pupils took part in caving, tree climbing, orienteering, gorge scrambling and fell walking, with groups of eight to ten spending half a day on each activity.

Climbing high: Pupils reach new heights.

## Choir's 'Glee'-ful debut!

THORNTON Grammar School's new choir boasts more than 35 members, ranging from Years 7 to 11.

The BTG (Better Than Glee) choir rehearses for one hour every Tuesday after school. Our current favourites include *Valerie* sung by Amy Winehouse, *She Will Be Loved* by Maroon 5 and *Jar of Hearts* by Christina Perri.

With Christmas fast approaching, we will be doing our own take on some festive favourites, and hope to welcome both parents and pupils to an end-of-year concert.



Better than 'Glee!': Choir in practice.

## PUPILS STAGE SHAKESPEARE

SIXTEEN pupils from Years 8, 9 and 10 took to the stage at the West Yorkshire Playhouse in October as part of the annual Shakespeare Schools Festival.

After many weeks of hard work, we performed an abridged, half-hour version of *Richard III*, which is a gripping tale of ambition, murder and revenge.

The cast rose to the challenge of performing in a professional theatre and put on a great show, which was highly praised. Particular credit should be given to Mihir Joshi in Year 8, who was impressive as the evil King Richard.

The festival was also a great opportunity for our pupils to work alongside other schools, and experience life as a professional actor.

# Inside the HUMAN BODY



TGS hosted the annual Institute of Physics lecture on 21st September, entitled 'From X-rays to Antimatter'.

Schools from Bradford and beyond enjoyed an entertaining lecture by Dr Michael Wilson, who revealed how physicists have developed increasingly sophisticated ways of seeing inside the human body.

The audience of pupils and teachers from TGS, Immanuel School, St Joseph's College, Aire Valley, Ilkley Grammar and North Halifax Grammar also took an interactive tour of the latest medical imaging techniques, including CT, MRI and PET scanners.

X-ray vision: Shahabuddin Abbasi, Year 12, Lauren Griffiths, Year 11 and Tom Powell, Year 12.



Peak performance:  
Our new assessment facilities.

## Pupils make progress

AS part of the development of the new Humanities Faculty, staff across Citizenship, Geography, History, Religious Studies, Business and Economics, Law, Sociology and General Studies have been working on different ways to show how much pupils have learnt in their lessons, and how much progress they have made. This is an important factor in their understanding of the topics covered.

Key questions have included: what did they know at the start of the lesson, what did they learn during the lesson and, what evidence have they got that they have learnt this.

## Up to the mark

IN Design Technology and Engineering, we have been focusing on peer assessment using a marking scheme incorporating pupil involvement.

Assessing each other's work has given pupils the opportunity for positive interaction and allowed them to discuss each other's work in a constructive and supportive way. The valuable feedback has encouraged pupils to talk about their work and reflect on their learning using lesson objectives as a focus.

Peer review: Pupils assess Art Deco design work.



## Helpful hints, higher grades

WHEN a pupil completes a piece of work, it is important to consider how it can be improved. Peer Learning is a great way of learning from our friends and producing better pieces of work.

As such, Years 8 and 9 have been embracing new technology such as the iPod Touch, microphones and flip cameras to give their classmates some helpful hints on how to improve their coursework so that they can achieve higher grades.



An App-t lesson: How technology is boosting achievement.

# FOCUS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

A GREATER FOCUS ON ASSESSMENT IS ENABLING PUPILS TO MAKE RAPID PROGRESS IN LESSONS

## Best practice

STAFF at Thornton Grammar have been sharing their expertise with colleagues through professional development sessions, including discussing the variety of learning experiences that happen in their classrooms.

There is a greater focus on assessment for learning. Pupils are being given the opportunity to reflect on their own progress through self-assessment, and are able to give each other feedback using a range of tools for peer assessment. This has resulted in pupils becoming more involved in their own learning and making greater progress in lessons.

The die is cast: Year 7 pupils.



## COUNTER INTELLIGENCE

AS well as embracing new technology, devices such as board games are used at TGS to enhance teaching and learning. These can be used to teach theory or as a revision aid. The only difference when playing the game with various years is the level of questioning on the quiz cards.

Pupils can work either individually or in groups. After rolling the die, but prior to moving the counter, they have to answer a question correctly. If they do not know the answer, they can use a textbook or notes to find the relevant information.

In Textiles Technology lessons the game has encouraged pupils to be competitive, as well as helping to focus on their team-building skills. It has also helped them to learn independently, and has helped to strengthen their planning, research and revision skills.

# ACTIVITIES WEEK

Off to see

## The Wizard

MORE than 100 pupils from across the school were involved in the summer production of *The Wizard of Oz*.

After-school rehearsals began at the

end of June, and the crew set about constructing the set, creating costumes and producing souvenirs.

At the end of Activities Week, the cast

performed in front of two audiences of Years 7, 8, 9 and 10s, and gave two more evening performances during the following week, to rave reviews.



Following the yellow brick road: Dorothy and friends.

### NEWSHOUNDS

DURING Activities Week, Thornton Grammar's media hounds were out and about, taking pictures, conducting interviews, writing articles and reading the news. Their aim was to discover what everybody was doing, and turn it into headline news.

They also had time to visit the National Media Museum in Bradford, where they watched a short Wallace and Gromit film, looked at old cameras and read the news at a professional news desk.

**'A good time was had by all'**

FOR one week only during the summer term, staff and pupils at Thornton Grammar take part in a wide range of exciting and educational activities.

These replace the usual school timetable, and include new experiences such as marketing, acting, Bollywood dancing, pizza-baking and F1 racing. Pupils also have the opportunity to go on a trip to Germany and attend the annual summer outdoor activities camp.

## Let's CELEBRATE!

AT the end of term, pupils in Year 7 were treated to a Summer Celebration Day funded by Friends of Thornton Grammar School, in recognition of their efforts since joining the school. Together, they launched rockets, designed racing vehicles and played African drums.

Many proved to have expert circus skills, including juggling, plate-spinning and tightrope-walking. In the resulting Circus Show, pupils dazzled and terrified the audience in equal measure with their displays on the unicycle and bed of nails.



Multi-talented: Amrit Singh, Year 7.

### GOLDEN GIRL

VICKY Spink, Thornton's 'Golden Ambassador', has passed her level 1 coaching in netball, and is now supporting the delivery of Key Stage 3 netball in extra-curricular clubs, as well as the development of other leaders within the school.

Vicky has become a fantastic role model within school.

### Strictly TGS!

TWO of our gifted Dance Leaders, Elisha Edwards and Tyler Cunliffe, are choreographing their own street dance teams. Their innovative ideas and rigorous training schedules, combined with the commitment and enthusiasm of the dancers, are certain to set pulses racing.

Meanwhile, Victoria Walker, Beth Purchon and Abigail McPeake passed difficult auditions to attend the Dance United Academy, where they will learn their craft from top choreographers and perform at prime venues including Sadler's Wells in London.

### Racing's a drag!

CONGRATULATIONS to Jacob Kopasz in Year 9, who finished in tenth place in the European Drag Racing Championships.

Racing in front of 25,000 spectators, the Thornton Grammar pupil's devotion to the sport started at the age of nine when he was given a 'Hyperactive' car as a birthday present.

## Swift by name, swift by nature



JACK Swift has retained his title as national FEKO Kumite champion for his age group, after competing in Nottingham against opponents from all over the country including Wales and Scotland. Jack is also a member of the national squad.

FEKO Kumite champion: Jack Swift.

## Premier players

IT is the first time in three seasons that we have been able to enter a senior team in the Bradford Schools Netball League. The team is composed of new players as well as three committed and enthusiastic

pupils who have represented the school since Year 7.

Two Thornton girls are also excelling in football. Leah Turner already attends the North Yorkshire Centre of Excellence and Sophie Murphy has just passed through trials and now attends the Development Centre for Bradford.



Court success: Olivia Clayburn, Jessica Garside and Molly Eley, Year 11.