



JRS Express

It has been almost nine years since I took up the role of head teacher at JRS and I would like to take the opportunity to thank families, parents and carers for their ongoing support. I know that not every head teacher is fortunate enough to have the quality of conversation that I am able to have with many of you. In a time when many services are struggling with the demands they are under, the support of our families for what we try to achieve here at JRS remains a major strength of the school.

It has been a particular pleasure to speak to many of you at parents' evenings this year and finally, after a delay due to snow, to welcome Year 7 parents to their first opportunity to meet staff face to face. The feedback that parents provide us on the questionnaires completed on these evenings is discussed both in the senior team and at governors so your comments are taken seriously as we recognise what we do well, and continue to look to improve.

In previous years, parents have queried the amount of information they receive on their child's progress over a twelve month period. Our formal contact with parents is a parents' evening, full report and interim report each year. Year 11 further benefits from a meeting with parents and a member of the senior team around the time their reports are issued. Please remember that all your child's outcomes and targets for all their assessments in school are recorded on the target setting page of their planner and this is an excellent way to keep an eye on how they are doing in each subject.

Families also support us with attendance. Our attendance is slightly above national average, but still well below what it was before the Covid pandemic, with a significantly higher proportion of students classed as 'persistently absent' meaning they are missing school at least one day a fortnight, (attendance lower than 90%). Anything that you all can do to ensure students are in school as often as possible will be greatly appreciated and we will contact you with your child's attendance over these first two terms of the year shortly after Easter.

Peter Blackburn



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ASSEMBLIES AND FORM TIME READING

As Easter approaches, during form time, students are deciding on their entries to the British Values / United Nations Hall of Fame 2024 - look out for the updated Hall of Fame in the dining room and reception in April. Will entries from previous years still be featured or will we have some new faces? Each form was given a British Values and United Nations attribute and had to find a famous person their form felt best represented qualities like mutual respect, professionalism, individual liberty and integrity.

On top of this, we have continued with form time reading, finishing off the articles from head students with a text about the links between sport / exercise and mental health; we've read an article about gender bias for International Women's Day and materials linked to the Explicit Behaviour Curriculum and organisation for the school day.

In assemblies, we've covered lots of topics - including the return of The Bluebird to Coniston, Safer Internet Day, the advent of spring and staying safe in the countryside; how a positive comment can lift our spirits and the importance of trees and their impact on the environment.

Mr Walker

SIX WORD SHORT STORIES - WORLD BOOK DAY COMPETITION

To celebrate World Book Day 2024, students (and staff!) were invited to enter a six word short story competition, inspired by Ernest Hemingway. We heard examples of six word short stories throughout the day in school and had over 100 entries. The winners received prizes in assembly and are published here. Our judge was a local authority school improvement officer who judged all the entries anonymously.

Third place – staff – Mr Walker: Setting fire to confetti; love blazed.

Third place – students – Maisie Year 11: Brand new bridal dress. Never Worn.

Runner up – staff – Mrs Jones: Greece. Beach. Heaven. Return flights cancelled.

Runner up – students – Charlotte & Gretel Year 7: The knife struck before death did.

Staff winner – Mrs Graham: Starving baby wails. No milk. Silence.

Student winner – Mia Year 7: She mouthed one disturbing word: 'Run!'

Mr Walker



You may remember that back in the Autumn Term our lucky Year 7 students were given a free book, courtesy of the Bookbuzz programme, run by the BookTrust. Two of our lovely Year 7 students, Freya and Charlotte have very kindly reviewed two of them for us:

My Own Lightning-by Lauren Wolk

This book is a wonderful story of how events can cause ripples that affect people and change their future. Suffering from post traumatic shock from what happened at school, Anabelle is struck by lightning and left with a powerful bond to animals around her. I would recommend this book because it has a twist of mystery to it.

Review by Charlotte

Our Sister Again - by Sophie Cameron

On a small island off the Scottish coast a girl called, Isla and her family are mourning the loss of her older sister Flora who passed away three years ago. When they get the opportunity to get her back, they take it!

When Flora comes back the family are amazed with how real she is, it's Flora! They are over the moon to have their daughter back, but not everyone on the island agrees. As time goes on Flora turns independent and more secretive, is she hiding something?

The book is a modern, mysterious story which I would recommend because of how different it is.

Review by Freyja

WORLD PI DAY: A SIX WORD STORY...

Pi crossword winner: Elliot, Year 10!



OUTDOOR LEARNING

All of Year 9 had an enjoyable and informative visit to the Mountain Rescue base in preparation for their bronze D of E expedition in July. Students learned about mountain safety, essential navigation skills and what to do in an emergency. Many thanks to Mrs Ribchester and the Coniston Mountain Rescue volunteers who gave up their time for the morning for the benefit of our students. Many thanks also to our Year 9 students and their parents/carers for donating a very impressive total of almost £135 towards the Mountain Rescue Team following their visit.



“The object of true education is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy them.” – John Ruskin

ADVENTURES AWAY FROM HOME DAYS WITH THE PRIESTLEY CENTRE

We were fortunate to be offered 3 funded days for outdoor activities to work with some of our Year 9 and Year 10 girls. We had a fabulous time and Ms Richards was truly impressed with the resilience and teamwork of these girls in some adverse weather conditions. They threw themselves into all the activities which included ghyll scrambling, climbing and canoeing. We also did some important sessions on challenging ourselves and stepping out of our comfort zones. Many thanks to the Priestley Centre for a wonderful 3 days.

Ms Richards



GEOGRAPHY

Year 8 students had an enjoyable afternoon in the village completing their geography fieldwork on the land use and different types of shops and businesses in Coniston. All the students worked hard and had a practice at conducting questionnaires to shoppers and business owners. They have been completing follow-up work analysing their results in geography lessons.

Year 7 had a fantastic trip on the Coppermines Trail and the Ruskin museum to focus on the local history and geography of our amazing location. There was an added excitement this year as we were the first JRS visitors to see the restored Bluebird in the museum! We also learned how the settlement of Coniston is inextricably linked to the mining industry in the 19th century through following the Coppermines Trail, and the many interesting features that make Coniston a popular tourist destination. Huge thanks to the Ruskin museum for their continued welcome and kindly letting in local students for free to enhance their learning.



Additional thanks must also go to both the Ruskin Museum and the Coniston Business Forum for the commemorative goody bags received by all students to celebrate the return of the Bluebird!

Ms Richards

INSPIRED BY WORDSWORTH

Composed using lines of poetry written by Year 7 on their trip to Dove cottage

By the lake in the frosty air
A flower starts to bloom.
It lives among lonely trees - comforting them.
Yet dead bracken still embraces the hills
And dusty orange leaves are spread over the floor.

I heard a butterfly laughing,
In the gentle swaying of those trees:
Warm and welcoming,
Before slowly
 fading
 away...

The landscape is becoming a luscious green,
With bright blue water glistening in the sun.
Just like a happy memory, the golden sunrise fills my heart -
Gleams upon the heart of Cumbria.

Pay attention.
The land doesn't rest.

Without warning,
Thundering clouds
gather high above,
Clinging to the fells;
Silhouettes clogging the sky
As the mountain echoes.
Booming.

And then:
No sound.
No land.
No grand gorgeous skies glistening down on me.

I stand still:
Silent.
Watching.

And the flower blooms.

Mrs Ribchester

YEAR 7 TRIP TO DOVE COTTAGE

The start of March saw all of Year 7 going on our annual trip to Dove Cottage, home of William Wordsworth. We have great ties with The Wordsworth Trust and they ensured that we had a range of activities to do: visiting the cottage, doing a tour of the museum, having a mini poetry workshop and finally a walk into the countryside that inspired Wordsworth and his sister, Dorothy so much.

While there were only a few daffodils poking the golden spears into the drizzly filled skies, there was certainly a 'host' of Year 7 students who did the school proud.

Their enthusiasm did not falter one jot, or perhaps I should say 'drop' despite the less than springlike weather. If it was reading through the delicate transcripts on display; attempting to write with a quill pen or listening to a poem read aloud on a damp fell side overlooking Grasmere, they were certainly full of enthusiasm.

Mrs Wright



“Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity.” - William Wordsworth

THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT WELCOMES A VISITING POET- AMELIA LOULLI

As a follow up to the Year 7 trip to Dove Cottage, the English department were delighted to welcome Amelia to our school. Currently, our Year 7 students are studying a group of poems all with the linked theme of the 'importance of place.' They already had a taste of how important the landscape was to the Wordsworths and Amelia gave them an opportunity to explore their own experiences of a 'place.' One technique she focused on was to get them to create thoughtful metaphors. Here are just a few: 'Trees are a green paradise,' 'paradise is a walk around a village,' 'chaos is a gloomy sea,' 'Heaven is an endless thrill of fun,' and 'paradise is a dog running through a field.'

Again the Year 7 classes were full of enthusiasm and, more importantly, creativity. I wish we had space to include all the finished poems but here is one example of the finished product:

The Cottage Kitchen

When I was baking in the cottage kitchen,
I stopped and laid down my spoon,
I gazed out of my window with happiness in my heart,
The room filled with the scent of half done gingerbread,
I shaped the dough into little people,
I opened the oven,
The heat rose and delicately touched my face,
The gingerbread were in the warmth, going golden brown,
I opened the oven door,
The smell was delightful,
I iced the family,
Added the Smarties for eyes,
I was done.

Evie Stanbrook



INFO ABOUT AMELIA AND HER POETRY:

My workshops are focused on the creative process and how poets turn the physicality of experience and memory into poetry.

My work is rooted in the body, in personal experience, and the belief that anything can be poetry and all of us poets. I take inspiration from nature, often in its most ordinary forms, and the landscapes we live amongst- whether they be impressive, mountainous vistas, or the street at the back of the house.

I offer workshops which explore the work and creative practices of contemporary poets and can also facilitate workshops which explore the work and creative practices of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, from Dorothy Wordsworth's journaling to William Wordsworth's Theory of Poetry and its processes.

My debut poetry collection is due out with Jonathan Cape in May 2024.

Amelia Loulli

“What is poetry? The suggestion, by the imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions.” – John Ruskin

John Ruskin School was chosen to take part in a creative art project organised by the Lake District National Park Partnership.

The project ran for 6 weeks with the support of a production company called Swerve & DJ. The sessions were after school and interested students worked together to produce a piece of music which highlighted aspects of the National Park's management plan that they felt were important to them.

Staff from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, the funding organisation, then travelled from London to visit our school and, with representatives from Action with Communities in Cumbria, met with the students involved. They were "bowled over" by how engaged and thoughtful this group of students were and the work they had done.

Well done Gretel, Elliot, Josh, Cecilia, Lilly and Archie

The resulting piece of work is just fabulous. It has been shared on social media and will be presented to the Lake District Park Authority later in the year. I am really proud of the commitment these students have shown.

£1400 was kindly donated to the school which will be spent on outdoor seating for all our students to enjoy

Mrs Gaskell



The guys from Horizon Studios worked with us for 6 weeks, going through the '5 Outcomes' which the LDNP hope to achieve. We discussed our thoughts on these outcomes and drafted the lyrics based on what we agree with and what we dislike. I took the song and over the course of two months, filmed and edited the video as a visual to the song to help get across the message. It was an amazing opportunity to work with others, and to have our voice heard.

Archie

FUTURE CHEF REGIONAL FINALS

Observing Year 11 Maisie's commitment and progression to regional finals has been a highlight of the term.

Maisie teamed up with Ambleside's Michelin star chef Ryan Blackburn to create a menu based on their shared inspiration of the locality of the Lake District. Maisie spent evenings at both Kytsy and The Stamp House to learn from the very best and helping with a busy Saturday service.

We learnt some tips of the trade and it will only be white pepper for us in the future!

The finals took place at St. Helens college with professional kitchens and chef whites to match. The standard was extremely high and it was obvious any of the candidates could have gone through.

Although this was the summit for Maisie this time I am confident we will be seeing much more from her and other JRS students in the future. Well done Maisie!

Miss Curbishley



“Cookery means...the knowledge of all fruits and herbs and balms and spices; it means carefulness, inventiveness, and watchfulness.” - John Ruskin

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

As we approach the end of KS3 rotations the student chefs have the opportunity to create their own dishes or add some flare. I have been impressed by not only the skills demonstrated but the professional finish to products alongside dedicated planning.



TEXTILES

How creative and resourceful are our students? The creativity and production this term has been inspiring. With a plethora of projects being completed across the Design Technology department. Here are a couple of images that have been through the design process from research, initial and developed designs to final outcomes.



YEAR 11 DRAMA PRACTICAL PERFORMANCE

They've done it! The first cohort of GCSE drama students have completed their final practical performance, showing extensive characterization through facial expression, body language and tone of voice. Their use of proxemics was particularly interesting and I knew there was talent across the group as nearly half of them have auditioned and been accepted to continue expanding their performance techniques at Kendal college. Perhaps we have one or two stars in the making?



“Nature is painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty.” – John Ruskin

REPLICA - HOME PERFORMANCES

Thank you for all your support and feedback on the Replica home performances. For those who couldn't make it, you missed being transported back to your own school days, with each audience member sat at a desk and asked to write feedback throughout the performance. This fully immersed the audience in the setting of the play where the plot was mixed up and some characters had a replica. The audience were left to decide what was real and what was not. It was incredible to receive such detailed and helpful critique from the audiences and the National Theatre representative director who was extremely impressed by how supportive and warm the cast were to one another. We worked hard on these notes to improve the performance ready to take to The Blackpool Grand on Tuesday 26th April.

KURLING

On 23rd March, the secondary Kurling competition took place at Cartmel Priory school. Two teams went along from Years 7 and 8.

All students competed well with confidence, accuracy and a good skill level, demonstrating good teamwork.

The Year 7 team finished in 3rd place overall, bringing home bronze medals.

Year 8 team:
Noel, Leon, Jack

Year 7 team:
Sam, Tommy, Joshua, Freddie

Mrs Walker

Miss Curbishley



JOHN RUSKIN SCHOOL FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE.



The school Fundraising Committee would like to say thank you to all parents and carers who supported our Bingo Night on Saturday, 27th January; whether you donated a prize; advertised the event or turned up on the night to play we couldn't have done it without you. The night was great fun and really well attended but also profitable: we managed to raise a huge sum of money-£1880 to be precise! Our next purchase for the school will be outdoor seating for our students.

Our thanks also go to Stuart who was our Bingo caller for the night and Mrs Hill for her continued help.

We would like to acknowledge the support we received from local businesses. Our 'House' prices were kindly donated by: Dove Cottage; The Coniston Inn; The Crown (Coniston); The Yewdale (Coniston); Lakeland Motor Museum and Cafe Ambio; Haverthwaite Railway and Zeffirellis.

We also had very generous gifts from: Coniston Shops-The Sun, The Greenhouse Keeper, The Bluebird Cafe and Bottled and Brewed, Hutchinson's, Just for Ewe, Lakes and Country and Coniston Corporate. Ambleside shops-Ambleside Sheepskin, Cunningham's, Detail Retail, Stiles Coffee Shop, Walnut Fish Bar, Blacks, JF Martin Ltd., Ambleside Climbing Shop, Friars, Hayes and Rush. Greenodd and Ulverston shops-Booths, The Sipping Fox and Armers. Millom shops-Spoilt For Choice and Tesco. Langdale shops-Langdale Leisure and Langdale Co-op. Hawkshead -The Chocolate Factory. If we have missed any contributors then please accept our sincere apologies.

As you can see, the support we get is amazing.

What a fantastic JRS and the local community team effort!

Mrs Wright

"Life is a magic vase filled to the brim ... it overflows into the hand that drops treasures into it ... drop in charity and it overflows love." - John Ruskin

CONISTON 14: ADVERTISED AS THE, 'MOST BEAUTIFUL ROAD RACE IN BRITAIN.'

After a gruelling race around the lake, there were a lot of hungry and COLD runners who were ready for refreshments. This was where the John Ruskin Fundraising Committee stepped up to the mark.

We would like to say a big 'thank you' to all friends and families who baked cakes, made sandwiches or served refreshments on the day.

Although there isn't an official final total as I am writing this, our funds have been boosted by approximately £1,113.

At the end of the afternoon there was quite literally not a crumb left!

We would like to say a special thank you to Mrs Hill who had, luckily, baked 14 cakes, 'just in case' and our students, Georgie, Melissa and Ruby who all helped with refreshments.

Additionally, a special thank you needs to go to Oliver who helped collect car parking money that goes directly to the school - he was very polite, calm and mature, even when he was practically blown across the field by the exceptionally blustery wind.

Mrs Wright

THE NEW MOBILE PHONE RULES AT JRS

Earlier this term, the government published new guidance for schools about mobile phones - this meant we changed our mobile phone policy and now students need to switch off their phones as soon as they come onto the school site and keep their phones in their lockers until 3.35 pm.

We have been really impressed by the way students have adapted to this new rule - they have shown true JRS resilience in helping us to keep JRS a mobile phone free and have shown real respect for the new rule around school. We are pleased to report that sightings of mobile phones are virtually zero and that students, quite rightly, are coming to school to focus on their learning without the distractions of social media.

Our students have been a real credit to the school by adapting to the new rule in such a mature and cooperative manner.

JRS SLT



John Ruskin School
Lake Road
Coniston
Cumbria
LA21 8EW

Phone: 015394 41306 / 41411

E-mail: admin@jrs.org.uk



We hope you all have a happy and healthy holiday and look forward to seeing you all once more in the new term!

**Remember: term starts on Monday
15th April 2024**

Many thanks to all who have contributed to the Easter issue of the JRS Express.

Please look out for the next edition arriving in your inbox at the end of the summer term!