



BIRKENHEAD  
HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY

GDST  
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

# BHSA Newsletter

Spring Term

2019

Edition 03

## Trampolining Team Congrats!

Huge congratulations to our Year 7-9 elite trampoline team competing in this year's 'School Trampolining Competition'. It was a massive achievement for them to qualify for each round; they made it through to the national finals and finished in 4th place in the entire country.



Welcome to our bumper third edition of our new look newsletter. As we go to press the girls are still making the most of every opportunity given to them here at BHSA; the cadets away for the weekend at Altcar, our Year 11 girls on a Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition on Moel Famau and girls of all ages competing in the BHSA Music Festival on Sunday. As you will see from the huge range of activities celebrated in this newsletter, the girls never cease to amaze me with their talent, creativity and resilience. The same can be said for our staff, who go that extra mile time and time again to give the girls these fabulous opportunities. It has been an action packed term and I do hope you enjoy reading about all their achievements. Thank you once again for your continued support for everything we do here at school. I hope you have a relaxing break and we look forward to seeing the girls back on Monday 15th April.

Rebecca Mahony

## Awarded Champion Status

Birkenhead High School Academy has been awarded champion school status for their involvement in National Citizen Service (NCS), a government-backed youth programme for teenagers.

BHSA received the status in recognition of the continued support given to the scheme, encouraging more than 50 students to take part in NCS, which helps young people develop a broad range of skills that have life-long value, such as leadership, team-working, confidence, independent thinking and community responsibility.

Mrs Godfrey and Mrs Heritage accepted the prestigious Bronze award on behalf of the school at an awards ceremony in Liverpool.

## Music Celebration Event

The Junior and Senior Choirs had the chance to perform as part of a Music Celebration Concert this week involving a number of local primary schools. Each choir performed a number of songs and then everyone joined in for a massed choir performance of various songs. The performance was thoroughly enjoyed by all and the girls relished the opportunity to sing with a variety of other choirs.

# Joseph Venning Mural



The artist, Joseph Venning, is known for his wonderful community art and he has already created a striking painted mural for school in the music department. He recently worked with Miss Mooney, Head of Art, designing a new piece of art for the conference hall based on inspirational women. This new mural has been painted in the suffragette colours of purple, white and green and the project was funded by the PA. We hope students, staff and visitors will enjoy trying to identify all the women represented!

Principal Mrs Mahony said: "I hope it inspires all the girls now and in the future to aim high, set no limits and aspire to great things."

In January, some of our students were chosen to be peer mentors across the academy. They were trained by Kayte Walsh, who came in and ran two afternoon sessions about how they could support students who, for a variety of reasons, were finding their time in school difficult.

We are therefore pleased to announce that we have 30 students across juniors and seniors who are now fully trained. They will be introduced in assemblies and they will have a notice board with their names on so that people who might need a friend can find them easily. If someone is struggling, then there is someone they can always ask for help or advice. The girls will run frequent meetings so that people can come and chat to them informally and, thanks to the PA, they will have purple lanyards so they are easily identified to others who might need them.

We look forward to hearing about the work that they are doing in future newsletters.

## Peer Mentors

## PSHE Days

Year 10 have had two PSHE days in the last half term. Our first day on the 25<sup>th</sup> had a future focus. Sessions were delivered by Liverpool John Moores who talked about choices at higher education; we had Karen Kimura from GDST Trust who talked about their online social profile and about how this might be used in the future. There was a session on money led by Miss Aspinall, and in our next PSHE day on April 23<sup>rd</sup> we have a company called 'Keep the cash' running a complete day on money management. We also had our careers adviser running through how students can access information to jobs, careers and apprenticeships. We hope that it was useful in getting the students thinking about what they may want to do in the future.

Our second day on the 1<sup>st</sup> February was all about keeping safe. Jo Seggie, our health worker, led a session on alcohol awareness and the Brook ran two sessions on healthy relationships and FGM. We also had a session on drugs and social media delivered by Lea Sloane, Wirral drugs advisor. The day finished with a session on relationships; being safe and making positive choices.

The students were, as always, a credit to the academy. Outside speakers spoke of how impressed they were with their focus and interaction. Well done Year 10!

# Poland Trip

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February, thirty 6<sup>th</sup> form and year 11 students embarked on a trip to Krakow, Poland with Miss Murphy, Mrs Crawford and Mrs Saccheri. Our first evening was spent in the main square, taking in the beauty of the architecture and enjoying a carriage ride around the city.

It was an early start for our visit to Auschwitz Birkenau on the Friday. Our guide took us around Auschwitz I first. We went around the buildings that had once held thousands of Jews from around Eastern Europe and witnessed possessions that had been left behind. Most harrowing was the children's section where we could see the children's shoes, clothes and toys that had been taken off them as they entered the camps.



Later, we entered Auschwitz II and nothing could have prepared us for the rows and rows of wooden huts that housed the 1.1 million people who died there. They housed wooden bunk beds with no heat or proper sanitation. It was a stark reminder of how humanity can treat one another. As we moved around the camp to see the crematoria, we were aware that we were walking where once people had walked to their deaths.

We will be sharing our stories with the rest of the students in assembly in April.

We also visited the salt mines: an underground mine that would take 9 months to walk around in its entirety, but we only did a small part. We saw some of the sculptures that had been created entirely out of salt, and even a whole church underground - including the chandeliers! Some of our students also licked the walls to find out if it was true that they were made of salt... they were indeed!



On our last day, we went to Oskar Schindler's factory which now houses a museum about what happened to the people of Poland during World War II. We then took a tour of the Jewish quarter and finished back in the square for some time to enjoy one of the cake shops.

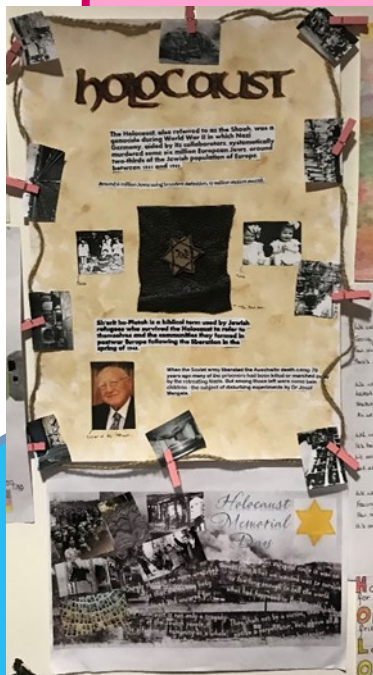
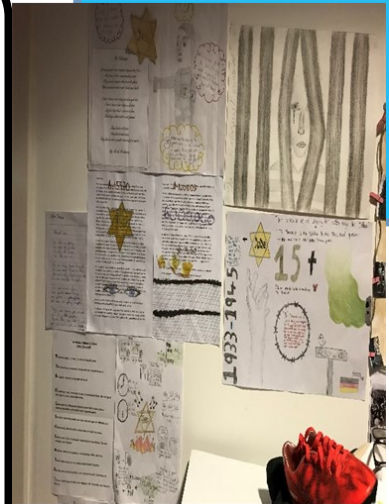
It was a wonderful trip, and one I'm sure no one will forget.



# Holocaust Memorial Day



This year, after studying the Holocaust, our Year 7 students created their own memorials to the Holocaust and the RS department were blown away by the amazing things they created: from posters to suitcases, canvases to poems written in both German and English. Well done to all who took part, you most certainly helped our school to remember the importance of the day. A special well done to Amelia Price and Grace Courtliff who made two powerful videos that were shared with all of our students to remember the day.



We also had 40 year 9 students attend the Floral Pavilion for the Wirral School's Holocaust commemoration to hear how one young girl found herself on the Kinder transport. We listened to Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines, and how the Holocaust affected her and her family. A moving story that I'm sure our students won't forget.



## Upcoming...

Humanities 'Egg'stravaganza. Design an egg-shaped creation for our humanities competition. The 'egg' can be decorated with any historical person, religious idea/symbol or any geographical place in mind. Entries must be handed into a humanities teacher by Wednesday the 17<sup>th</sup> April for the winner to be chosen on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April. Good luck. We look forward to seeing your entries.

[Eggs can be made from paper mâché, or you may use a real egg but please ensure it is hardboiled and that you do not bring your design in any earlier than Monday the 15<sup>th</sup> April.]



It's been a busy time for the CCF since our inaugural parade in January, where we were lucky enough to have the mayor of Wirral and other dignitaries from the Army and NWRFCFA in attendance. We have been focussing on learning the basics in the recruits phase, such as drill and turnout, as well as some basic first aid. Our parent unit, 208 field hospital, visited us at the start of February, giving us a tour of their Battlefield Ambulance (BFA) and helping the cadets to understand the roles of the regiment, from supporting combat troops to humanitarian missions and disaster relief across the world.



We have also had our first weapons training weekend, where the cadets are learning about responsibility and the safety aspects involved, and they are all a step closer to passing their Weapons Handling Test. We have also had a visit from the Colonel of Cadets (in charge of all cadets in the North West), and he was incredibly impressed with what we have achieved in such a short time. Our first overnight weekend is at the end of March at Altcar training camp, where recruits will be learning how to look after themselves in the field.

They will then be putting that into practice at the end of April when they will spend their first night under a basha in the woods at Nesscliffe Training Area in Shropshire. The year will then be finished off when some of our cadets get to attend annual camp at Warcop Training Area in July. Overall, an incredibly busy first year, and this doesn't even cover the building of our new stores in 6<sup>th</sup> form house and all the other admin that goes on in the background, for which I'd like to thank my CFAV staff. Finally, if you are interested in getting involved with cadets, please drop me an email at [ccf@birkhs.gdst.net](mailto:ccf@birkhs.gdst.net) and you can come in and have a look at what's going on and see if it's for you. The commitment would be 3:45 – 6:00 pm on Wednesdays, and the odd weekend. We're always looking for motivated and enthusiastic individuals to become part of the team and you'll get so much from the experience too!





## Ferry Cross The Mersey

The Year 5s experienced the full 'Gerry and the Pacemaker's' experience last week, singing in fine voice, as they sailed along the Mersey as part of their Project eXplore learning for this term. They carried out geographical surveys, both on the ferry and as they walked along the river bank to their final destination: Birkenhead Priory. This stunning building is the oldest in Merseyside and was the site of the original ferry service started by the monks. Thanks to all the girls and parent helpers for making this a great day out with connections to our curriculum galore!



KS1 and KS2 girls celebrated British Science Week in March with a Science Show from Science2U called 'Amazing Journeys'. The girls learnt about how our blood transports oxygen around the body, the job of the 'Super Hero' white blood cells and about how infections are transmitted. The Nursery girls enjoyed a hands-on science session and especially loved the flashing ducks!

During the afternoon, both Year 6 classes participated in a workshop. They saw some fantastic micrograph pictures of the human body and learned how soap works. An activity to make their own toothpaste and test it against a shop-bought sample ended the session; they concluded that their homemade toothpaste did a better job!

# Year 7 Science Club



In science club we have been discussing plastic pollution and the harm it does to wildlife, as animals are being killed entangled in plastic nets or from swallowing small pieces of plastic in the ocean and washed up on shores.

We have been collecting non-recyclable plastic such as crisp packets, and creating eco bricks with it. The girls have worked hard cutting the plastic into small pieces in order to fill plastic bottles with them.

When completed, the eco bricks will be registered online and sent off to be used in community projects. Some community groups are using eco bricks to create sculptures, furniture, and even build houses in some parts of the world.

We are spreading the message of reduce, reuse and recycle to try and protect our oceans and wildlife.



Planting cress seeds represented new life

Year 5 visited Trinity Palm Grove to learn the Easter story and the reasons Christians celebrate Easter.



We learnt about the events leading up to the death of Jesus, the meaning of Good Friday and the story of how he rose again on Easter Sunday.



We learnt about the layout of the church and the purpose of the altar.



# Year 5: The Easter Story

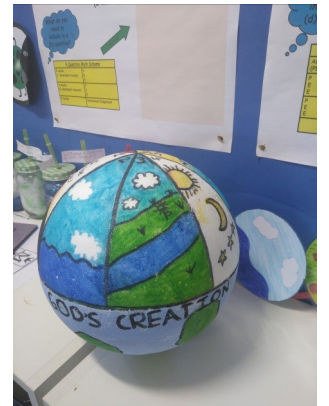




# Year 7 RE



These are some of the fabulous pieces of work that Year 7 have completed for RE on the story of Creation. Their talent and creativity is lovely to see!





# Literary Festival: Reading is Power

Between 26<sup>th</sup> February & 8<sup>th</sup> March, the library worked in liaison with the English Department and Junior School to bring a whole academy literary festival and celebrate World Book Day together. The theme for this year is 'Reading is Power' – to address the importance of reading and inspirations gained from reading.

A whole school Scholastic Book Fair was organised at both Junior and Senior sites. All money raised will be dedicated to developing the Junior School & Junior library collection.



A wide range of literary activities and quizzes were organised during World Book Day week. It was thrilling that our pupils were engaged in all these activities, such as 'shelfie' quiz, literary pairs quiz and lunchtime film show. On Thursday, World Book Day, apart from dressing up as the book characters, staff acted as the book influencers and spent 10 minutes at the beginning of the lesson to talk about a book which inspired them a lot. The aim was to enable pupils to hear at least 5 inspirational stories shared by the staff on the World Book Day.

On Friday, Alex T Smith, a highly-acclaimed UK writer and illustrator, visited our school and shared his books—the Claude series—and writing journey to Year 1 to 4 pupils. We also invited 5 other local primary school pupils to take part in the event and celebrate reading. The well-received event has remarkably encouraged the pupils' reading quest.

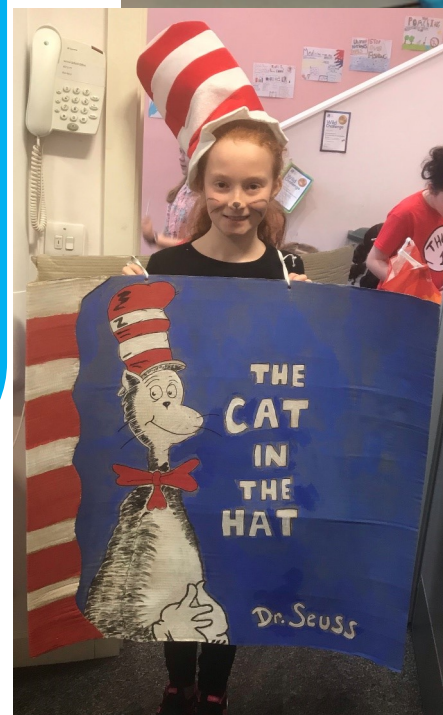


Mrs Doran, library manager, and Mr. Cassidy, Head of Communications Faculty, planned the literary festival this year and believe it to be another incredible whole school event which nurtured the pupils' love of reading and brought the whole school together.

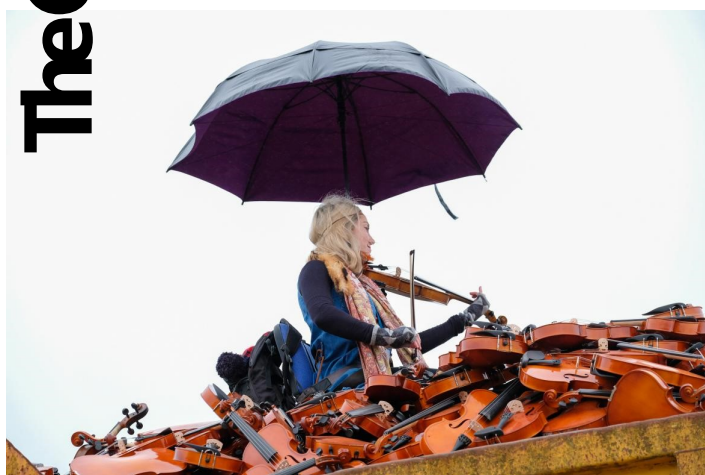
# World Book Day

World Book Day 2019 was a huge success in Junior School. The day began with an assembly to showcase our amazing outfits inspired by our favourite book characters. Year 6 then supported Nursery and Reception girls on a treasure hunt around the school on a quest to find the hidden literary pictures. Many fun activities were enjoyed throughout the day, from designing bookmarks to writing never-ending stories!

As usual, the whole school voted for their 'Best Dressed' teacher and pupil. Miss Leeman won the crown for the second time for her uncanny likeness to Hagrid from Harry Potter; Brooke Clarke stole the show with her creative 'Cat in the Hat' outfit. A huge thank you and well done to all parents and carers for their enthusiastic costume efforts once again.



## The Giant Spectacular



On a drizzly day in October, a lone Giant figure woke had washed up on the beach in New Brighton next to the lighthouse at Fort Perch Rock. As the sun started to rise, onlookers watched and waited for him to wake from his slumber and gasped as he slowly started to open his eyes and sat up. This Giant visitor was serenaded by a lone violinist sat atop a truck filled with violins playing the moving "The leaving of Liverpool" to aptly end his finale visit to the region.

A key part of the story, Jo Pue was the violinist who serenaded the Giant on his journey and provided a soundtrack atop more than 300 violins, donated to the show by residents and businesses locally and from afar. Post event, these violins have formed part of the legacy of the Giant Spectacular event and have made their way to school children across the city region, **including pupils at BHSA.**



# Nursery

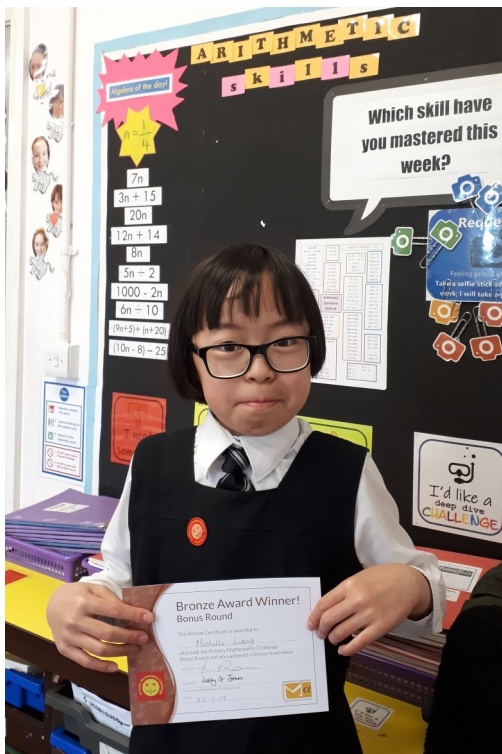


Nursery have been busy planting seed potatoes. We are going to plant lettuce, radish and broad beans too. Now we want sunshine and showers to help them grow.



## Primary Mathematics Challenge

Well done to Michelle Liang in Year 6 who participated in the national Primary Mathematics Challenge bonus round in February. She was the only pupil to be put forward into the next stage of the competition and received a Bronze certificate and a medal for her hard work, perseverance and determination to complete her incredibly difficult mathematics problems.





# Rainforest Dave

At the start of the Spring term, BHSA was visited by nationally renowned conservation expert: Dave Shaw (aka 'Rainforest Dave'). Our girls from Year 1 to 13 were taken on a journey through the flora and fauna of the tropical rainforest; they enjoyed a blowgun demonstration, a hands on experience with various reptiles and learnt how tribal groups survive and thrive in their Brazilian home!



## Student Leadership

We would like to say a huge thank you to the Year 6 House Captains who served Junior School so well during the first half of this academic year. Grace, Phoebe, Amelia, Daisy, Emily, Katie, Molly and Adriana rose to the challenges of the role superbly. Well done! And so to welcome the new House Captains for the second half of the year: Olivia, Ava, Amber, Seren, Madison, Awen, Bonnie and Amy. The new team have already started taking on some of their responsibilities through Junior School, proving to be another excellent team of student leaders.





# Unilever STEM Competition

A team of five girls from Year 9 took part in a STEM competition sponsored by Unilever this term. The BHSa project was to design a toothbrush that would not contribute to plastic pollution. The 'Better Brush' has a recycled aluminium handle and a replaceable head with photodegradable plastic bristles. It comes in 3 sizes and a range of colours and has its own, very convincing, website. Please do not attempt to buy one, however, since it has not been actually manufactured yet. On the other hand, if you are a prospective toothbrush manufacturer, please do get in touch, via either Mr Wakefield or Mrs Perry as the Y9 STEM team may be interested in doing business with you!

The girls worked incredibly hard and received many compliments about their branding, their extremely detailed research, their presentation skills and their very evident teamwork and collaborative abilities. The final assessment took place on 21<sup>st</sup> March and the standard of all entries was very high. Most importantly the team: Emily Burton, Chloe Goulbourn, Nina Hofmann, Charlee Maillet and Lucy Nile have enjoyed themselves immensely and are keen to pursue STEM careers.



GDST Techathon

Mr Austin and five Computer Science GCSE students travelled to the Code Node in London for the annual Techathon, attended by 23 of our GDST schools. This year's theme was Artificial Intelligence and there was an interesting talk from Lydia Gregory, co-founder of Feedforward, a company which develops machine-learning applications in the music industry. The girls enjoyed workshops about automatic drawing, image recognition and learning algorithms for questionnaires.

In the Dragons' Den competition, our girls were twinned with those from Northwood College as team Byte. They designed a device which would learn facial expressions to help autistic people to detect emotions in others. BHSa girls took a lead role in the pitching of this idea, articulately demonstrating its potential to impressed judges. Although they didn't win a prize this year, Mr Austin was very proud of the girls, who were excellent ambassadors for BHSa.

## Pi Day 2019

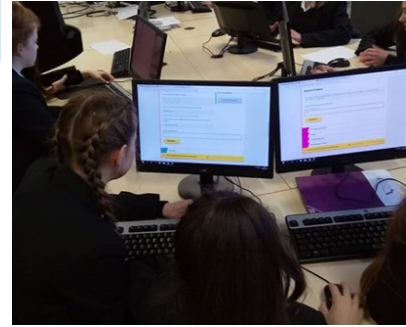
BHSa celebrated Pi Day on March 14<sup>th</sup> (3.14) with fun and games in the mathematics department. There was a memory game, won by Rose Bridson, who successfully recalled more than 250 digits of Pi! There were hula hoops, skipping, higher/lower and a pie baking competition, which Mr Rymer and Mr de Middelaer enjoyed judging.

Earlier in the week, the annual Pi Day assembly launched the event with a typically humorous video from the mathematics department. As well as the annual live appearance from Archimedes, all the way from ancient Greece, this year he was joined on stage by Pythagoras, all the way from the Pyramids Centre, Birkenhead.

# Cyber First Girls Competition

In January, Year 8 all took part in the national Cyberfirst Girls competition, designed to increase the number of women who enter the cybersecurity professions. In a week-long competition, the girls joined forces in teams of four to crack codes and solve problems.

Although we didn't make the national finals, our best performing teams did very well indeed, and the look of triumph on their faces each time they completed a task was great to see.



# Great Wirral Conversation



After the success of Year 8's last trip to speak with mature ladies on the subject: "Can women have it all?" a second group of 12 to 13-year-olds have visited the Johnson Foundation to discuss: "What is achievement and how can we measure it in the modern world?" The events have been a great opportunity for the girls to talk to older women who have enjoyed a career and compare the lives women can expect to lead now compared to what they were able to do in years gone by. They have all enjoyed their chance to discuss important matters with new people and everyone got on really well. The ladies were eager to tell us how impressed they were with the girls' manners and how well they engaged.

## Cyber Discovery

Year 10 computer science students have been taking part in the national Cyber Discover event, which is held over a few months. In the first wave, "CyberStart Assess", Charlotte Webster, Eleni Migos, Lauren Lever and Lucy Ainsworth did extremely well and qualified for the next stage, "CyberStart Game". All four were accepted into the next stage, "CyberStart Essentials" which is currently ongoing.

The event presents many problems, from codebreaking and coding through to hacking websites and servers to find information. It has given them a real insight into the secret world of cybersecurity.

# Sixth Form Instagram

The sixth form team invite you to follow them on Instagram: [@bhsasixthform](https://www.instagram.com/bhsasixthform)

There will be various snaps of our girls learning and having fun and also advice about university, apprenticeships and careers.





Year 1 have been looking at the work of artist Georgia O'Keeffe, a 20<sup>th</sup> century American painter, best known for her canvases depicting flowers, skyscrapers, animal skulls and south-eastern landscapes. Year 1 created their own works of art for their topic: Branching Out.

## Year 1



# Year 5 Boat Race



As part of their 'Ferry Cross the Mersey' unit, the Year 5s have been exploring and investigating forces, particularly that of water resistance. After designing and making streamlined boats from a variety of materials, the girls put these to the test with a thrilling boat race.

Lots of 'puff' was needed and each race led to some excellent evaluations and conclusions about their designs and the forces acting upon them.

# Wirral Speech & Drama Festival

Speech and Drama students from BHSA competed in the Wirral Speech & Drama Festival, held at BHSA on Saturday 16th March 2019. The Wirral Festival is a speech and drama competition affiliated to the British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech.

The children who entered the festival from BHSA have been working hard selecting and preparing verse speaking and prose reading pieces of literature. Not only do the children find this fun, it encourages and introduces them to new literature, as well as teaching the children good techniques and skills for public speaking.

**The children's hard work paid off with fantastic results.**

The girls performed their prepared pieces in front of a large audience, with adjudication at the end of the class. BHSA pupils' performances were all excellent; they are all a credit to both the school and themselves.

## RESULTS:

Vera B	1st Place Year 1	- Verse Speaking
Charlotte M	2nd Place Year 1	- Poetry
Nia R	2nd Place Year 2	- Verse Speaking
Daisy V	3rd Place - Year 2	- Verse Speaking
Charlotte H	3rd Place Year 4	- Prose Reading
Bethan R	1st Place Year 5	- Verse Speaking
Kate B	2nd Place Year 5	- Prose Reading
Alexa C	3rd Place Year 5	- Prose Reading
Aleesa P	2nd Place Year 6	- Poetry
Aleesa P	2nd Place Year 6	- Prose Reading



# Year 12 'Blues Programme'



Action for Children's Blues Programme gives young people a toolkit for life to build good mental health and is the first UK programme to run nationwide delivering this help to secondary school pupils. It is an innovative early help programme which tackles depression and anxiety in young people between the ages of 13-19. It's based on Cognitive Behaviour Therapy methods and helps young people understand the connection between negative thoughts, actions and feelings.

In November 2018, the Blues Programme was launched in Wirral and so far 68% of pupils accessing the programme have showed an improvement in their mental health and emotional wellbeing, with a specific decrease in depression and anxiety. Pupils also reported increased confidence and self-esteem, improved relationships and better engagement at school. The course runs for six weeks and has so far supported over 230 teenagers in the Wirral, providing them with the tools they need to cope in the modern world.

## 'Working Together' Event

'Working Together' is an information evening for parents & carers of students who attend BHSA Junior School and/or Senior School which is being held at BHSA on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2019, 6.30pm–8pm. All parents & carers are invited, but we ask that you **do not** bring children along to this event please.

Our local health service has teamed up with Wirral's youth support service to produce relevant and useful information. The aim of the session is to raise awareness of young people's current drug trends, alcohol use and mental health issues.

It is important for us all to work together to understand the risks that young people may encounter and your attendance at this event will enable us to continue to provide the best possible support for our young people and reduce their risk of harm. We want parents & carers to know what information their children are being taught in school.

The evening will cover:

1. Drugs
2. Alcohol
3. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Each session will be delivered by an expert in the field, and the aims of the sessions will be to inform you of the dangers and risks that young people face in these areas.

The sessions will be informal and there will be opportunities to ask questions & seek further information. Free tea, coffee and water will be available throughout the session



Cheshire and Wirral Partnership   
NHS Foundation Trust

teenwirr@l

**Working Together Evening**  
**For parents & carers**  
**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2019**  
**6.30pm – 8pm**  
**At BHSA Senior School**

**Any queries please contact BHSA on 0151 652 5777**

