

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2024 / Issue 65

## Diary Dates

**18th April** - Year 7 Parents' Evening  
**25th April** - Year 8 Parents' Evening  
**29th April** - Year 10 Careers Week  
**9th May** - Year 10 Parents' Evening  
**10th May** - GCSE/A Level Exams Start  
**24th May** - May Half Term Starts  
**3rd June** - Students back in school after May Half Term  
**4th June** - Year 6 Induction Morning  
**21st June** - GCSE/A Level Exams Finish  
**26th June** - Year 10 and 12 Mock Exams Start  
**5th July** - Year 10 and 12 Mock Exams Finish  
**9th July** - Year 8 HPV Vaccinations  
**10th July** - Year 6 Visit Day  
**11th July** - Year 6 Parents' Evening  
**22nd & 23rd July** - Activity Days for students in Year 7-10



### Great News!!

You can now donate to  
**Gell Friends** via  
**ParentPay**

Making it easier to  
support AGS

## Welcome from Mr Kelly

Welcome to this term's AGS newsletter!

A shorter term than most, but one in which much has been achieved and experienced.

I hope you enjoy reading the stories and accounts contained within, and get a glimpse into just some of things which help make our school such a great place to work and learn.

I'd like to thank and pay tribute to all of the staff, students and families who work so hard to make all of this possible.



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# AGS Annual Ski Trip

## What a trip!

Another very successful AGS ski trip under the belt for the school with a lot of firsts, even 26 years since this annual trip began. It's the first time we had zero trips to the hospital for the week, it's the first time we ran the trip without an Austrian tour operator and it's the first time the snow chains came out and had to be put on to the coach during the return journey. In a little more detail, we have been very lucky to come away from the trip entirely injury free which is down to the commitment of the students as well as the amazing instructors we used on the mountain this year. As I mentioned at the final parents' meeting, the death of our usual tour operator meant, as of the end of November last year the ski trip was non-existent. After a great deal of time being devoted to this in school, as well as by our other contacts in Austria, we reached a point where the trip could run.



On the return journey we left the main town of Villach in dreary rain, went through a tunnel and was then met with a foot of snow on the roads! The coach drivers were amazing and managed to drive through most of the weather until we reached a traffic jam and therefore got stuck. The drivers knew exactly what to do and got us moving again with the use of snow chains and continued on our way until the snow stopped at the border of Austria and Germany - then it was plain sailing from there!





**The progress that was seen with the students this year was amazing -**

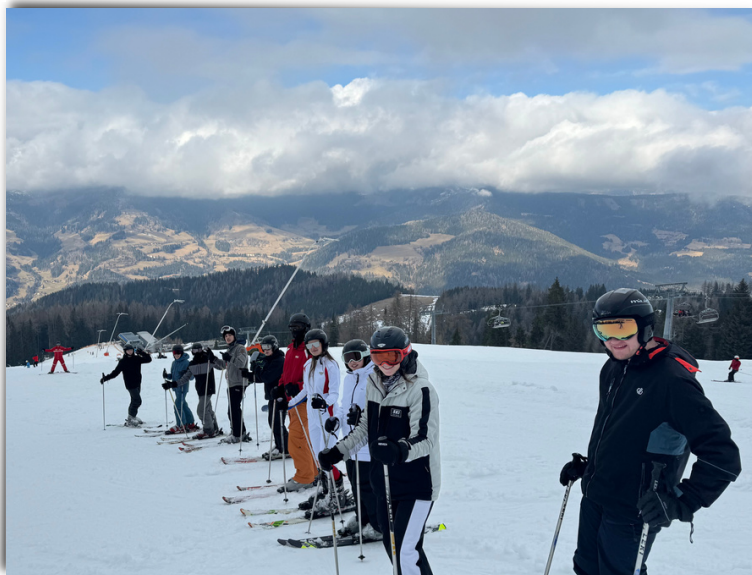


As staff we cannot remember a year when all students that have never put skis on before, managed to get to the top of the mountain just two days after starting their newfound hobby. Amazing! Each and every student's commitment to bounce back when they fell over or their skis fell off was great.



I would like to give my personal thanks to all the instructors, the coach drivers and all our contacts in Austria for such an amazing trip once again. My main thanks would have to go to the staff for their commitment and time given in supporting the 8-day trip, it would not be possible without them. Without their care, attention and teamwork, the trip would not have run as smoothly as it did.

**Mr Lomax  
Trip Lead**



# QA Staff



**Rob Mosley**

**What is your role at AGS?**  
Exams and Data Assistant.

**Did you go to university?**  
Yes, I completed my BSc (hons) in Chemistry at the University of Central Lancashire and in September, will be beginning my MSc in Nuclear Science and Technology with the University of Sheffield whilst continuing my work here at AGS.

**Why did you want to work at AGS?**  
AGS holds a place in my heart having come to the school for 6th form. I had been working in a different secondary school prior to joining the team, and when the job came up, I knew I couldn't pass up the opportunity to give something back to the school that I owe so much to.

**What do you do in your spare time?**  
I enjoy all things music and play the organ for services and concerts around the UK. I am also heavily involved in local Musical Theatre, currently serving as Musical Director for a local group. I still like to stay aware of things that are happening within the world of chemical sciences. Finally, I spend some of my time in most weeks, often painstakingly, watching my beloved Manchester United!

**If you had to summarise AGS in three words, what would they be?**  
Caring, Successful, Driven



**Vicky Salt**

**What is your role at AGS?**  
I am a religious Studies Teacher.

**What did you study at University?**  
I went to Bangor University in North Wales and I studied Theology. I really liked that the course had a wide selection of units on Philosophy, Ethics and Religion. I partly chose Bangor because it was small and set in a stunning location between the sea and the mountains.

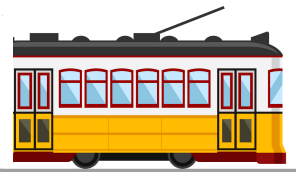
**Why did you want to work at AGS?**  
I have always wanted to work in a rural location, not too far from where I live. When I visited the school I could see that there was a real sense of community and it was a very welcoming place I wanted to become part of.

**What do you do in your spare time?**  
In my spare time I like to get outdoors in the garden. I live on a farm and I have been steadily trying to transform the garden from a basic grass area into an area that is relaxing and fun for my children to be in. I have tried to make it really wildlife friendly, planting things especially for bees and birds.

**If you had to summarise AGS in three words, what would they be?**  
Community, friendly, successful.



# Crich Tramway Trip



On the 28th February 2024, a group of Year 9 students visited the Crich Tramway Museum as part of their ongoing project linked to a South African tram that the museum currently has. The work done by the students has focused on ideas such as bullying and how we group ourselves as humans, against a backdrop of Apartheid in South Africa.

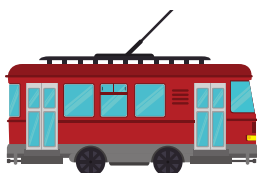
On the day, students were treated to a dramatic re-enactment, aboard the tram, of what it would have been like in early twentieth-century Johannesburg. The different rules and regulations imposed by the government on people of different ethnicities and what that must have felt like were brought to life by a brilliant team of volunteers. One of our students remarked that, "It just seems really unfair that people could be treated in this way simply because of the colour of their skin."

Students also worked with Kevin Fegan and Paul Warrington from the museum, along with a special guest speaker who grew up in Johannesburg during the time of Apartheid, to examine images of the country and give their thoughts on them. Hearing the guest speaker talk about how it was during this time of segregation was fascinating and helped to build upon the work done in classroom sessions.



Finally, students were able to walk around the museum's tram exhibition, looking more closely at the vehicles on display and even being able to board some of them. Certainly the day proved an excellent learning experience as well as a bit of a treat. The project has three sessions to go before it is completed and it is clear that all of the students involved are engaging with it well.

Mr Flint  
Director of Teaching and Learning  
Communications Faculty







# Year 13 Cooking on a Budget

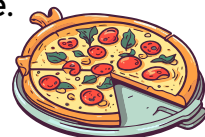
On the last Friday before half term we did a workshop which was centred around cooking on a budget. In our citizenship and religion lessons we created a word document which included our planned menu, involving the recipe and a step by step plan of how we would create our meal.

The challenge was to make a meal for less than £3.50 which would assist us in budgeting when we move away to uni or other places, to allow us to spend our money in a technical way and save where possible to create a content environment where money wouldn't cause stress and make us anxious. I decided to make salt and pepper chicken and all together the portion equaled £3.24.



All students including myself really enjoyed the challenge and it educated me on how I can spend my money in a rationalised way which would allow me to save money to take part in activities that I enjoy whilst away from my family, ensuring I have a positive experience.

Imogen Moss  
Year 13

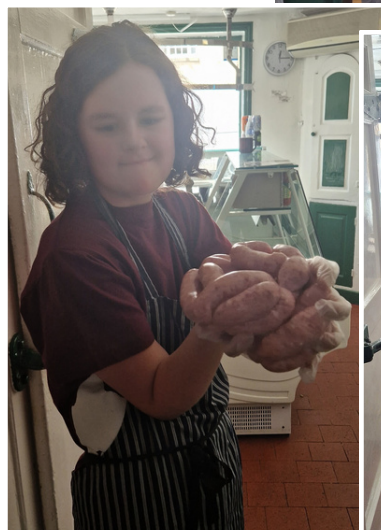
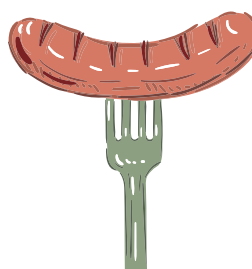
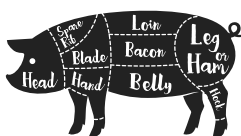


## Butchers Workshop

A lovely time was had by several of our AGS students, when they took part in a project about engaging with our community by visiting Walker's Butchers of Wirksworth to see how traditional, free range pork sausages are made. The students were warmly welcomed by Bridgit and Nick and were able to see all the different processes involved in sausage making, completely from scratch - from mincing the pork to linking the sausages. The students then had a go themselves at making sausages. This is the second time that our students have had the opportunity of learning how to make sausages - the last time was during June 2023.

A big thank you to Walker's Butchers for their kind invitation.

Mrs Greateorex  
Teaching Assistant







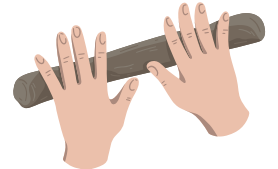
# Clay Workshop

Some Year 11 and 6th form students took part in a clay workshop delivered by Helen from 'The Clayrooms' Ashbourne. The morning was a big success with all students completing a face sculpture to go towards their portrait project. Each student was able to follow the step by step instructions Helen delivered through demonstrations and visual aids. All students applied their own individual ideas to personalise each piece to their project.



The sculptures have been taken to the Clayrooms to dry and be fired. On their return students will present the sculptures along with their drawings and paintings in an exhibition later in the year. We hope to see Helen again soon and we might even take a trip to the studio in Ashbourne next time.

Mrs Bailey  
Art Teacher



# ESFA Awards 🏆

Students at AGS have enjoyed a longstanding commitment to the creative and performance arts. At the heart of this commitment is the Create Faculty, who offer a wide range of subjects as well as 'Restoration Club', an extra-curricular group who restore and re-purpose old 'stuff'. When asked about the ESFA's trophy commission, Faculty leader Alistair Weightman, technician David Mason, and a crack team of students set about re-purposing some old science stools which had been destined for the skip. The team at AGS hope the winners enjoy the trophies which reflect the team, the school, and its community: old and full of youth, a bit rough around the edges, creative, and entirely committed to a bright and sustainable future for young people.







# KS3 Careers Week

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have taken part in our really busy Careers Week this half term. Students took part in lessons looking at the importance of careers and pathways in a range of subjects including Science, Maths, Geography and the Arts.

We had visitors from the Department of Work and Pensions who looked with us at the local labour market and gave students an introduction to Apprenticeships. The Higher Education Partnership Pathway came to school to talk to students in Years 8 and 9 about University study and Degree Level Apprenticeships. Our partners at Stepnell Construction and the Royal Navy ran Employability Skills Workshops for us, where students planned programmes of work for a building project and designed then set off rockets and flares! Leadership, Teamwork, Competition, Compromise, Persistence and Resilience were the skills we were seeking to develop in these workshops in a fun but valuable learning environment.



Year 9 also had a real window into the world of work as they all had the opportunity to visit an employer on the first day of Careers week. We were fortunate to be able to partner with Chesterfield Royal Hospital, Derbyshire Police, Longcliffe Quarries, GXO Logistics, Henry Boot and Cosy Direct for these visits. Students got hands on experience, site tours and took part in practical activities as well as being able to meet a range of staff at different stages in their careers.



We are hugely grateful to all our partners for helping us to organise such a busy schedule for students throughout this week. We are now organising Careers Week for Year 10, which will be happening during w/c 29th April, as well as our whole school Careers Fair that will be in the Autumn Term. If you would like to support any of our Careers events it would be much appreciated - please contact me via [klowe@anthonygell.co.uk](mailto:klowe@anthonygell.co.uk)

Mrs Lowe  
Assistant Headteacher





# Macbeth

Madness, magic, murder. Our production of Macbeth was incredible and to share it with such an amazing group - cast, crew and technicians - well, everyone put their everything into creating a fantastic interpretation of 'The Scottish Play'!

As rehearsals progressed, it was exciting to watch as it slowly come together - swords being brandished, banners strung from the wall. None of this would have been possible without the tremendous effort and dedication poured into the production by our amazing teachers; Mrs Barnes who created the costumes fit for medieval court; Miss Lowry who created a banquet fit for kings and Mrs Hampton who pulled everything together. We performed on Monday 12th February to students in the afternoon and a wonderful audience that evening. Then on Tuesday 13th February we performed the closing show. It was truly a sight to behold!

Martha Forster - Year 11



# Red Nose Day

On Red Nose Day, as a Sixth Form we did a baking competition where cakes had to be wonky, different or funny.

There were lots of entries, ranging from a cake shaped like a chicken to scary cookies with dungarees. We had a bake sale which was judged first, the winners creating a colourful monster cake.

We raised £102 from the bake sale alone, by selling our cakes to students from all Years.

Jess Glithreo, Sophie Poplar and Chloe Poplar - Year 12



The winning cake made by Jess, Sophie and Chloe.



Runner up is the red nose cake by Mrs Butt.



Joint third place is Kate Rodgersson (Chicken) and Jasmin Hurlstone (Chocolate cake).



# Writer's Workshop



## The Fright Of A Life

The bullets whistled past, and the sky was glum,  
Scared little John saw the death of his chum,  
His heart felt empty, his mate had just died,  
He had nothing to lose, no reason to hide,  
John sprinted out the trench on to no mans land,  
But he stumbled, rusty barbed wire cut his hand,  
Regardless he got up and sprinted to the Germans,  
I'll drop in and raid the trench, he determined,  
He clutched his rifle tight and threw in a smoke grenade,  
John jogged through the smoke and waited for the fog to fade,  
He fixed his bayonet and got ready to fight,  
But when the smoke faded there was no one in sight,  
Just a massive pile of bodies in the middle of the trench,  
John was shocked at the sight and felt his heart wrench,  
He heard a shout in the distance and went towards it,  
But when he reached the shouts, he felt like he got hit,  
His commander was in the trench too, but how?  
He spoke, "You need to get up RIGHT NOW!"  
"Wha.. Wha.. What do you mean?"  
"Stop panicking, this was all just a dream."  
John awoke to see his wife standing above  
"Oh that was horrible " he said "Just horrible my love "  
John was relieved that it was just a nightmare,  
But many brave men lived through this fright fair...

By Matthew Walker-Riggott - Year 8

As part of encouraging creative writing these are some wonderful pieces from Year 8 students. We will be making this a regular feature - so please email your writing for inclusion to Mrs Lovatt.

## Dying embers

We drag our half dead feet towards the whistled hell of battle,  
No birds or animals mark our passing,  
Into the blood steeped fields of grief,  
We march past the point of no return,  
There is only one way out now,  
And that is no way out at all,  
The haunted faces of our withered comrades,  
They welcome us into the deepest depths of hell,  
Empty souls standing sentinel to eternal torment,  
Tortuous images once again flood my head,  
Imprinted before my eyes his hand reaching out,  
But he is gone, it is almost as if he never existed,  
No one will remember,  
Except me.  
I carry the torch that is his memory,  
Barely embers now,  
Soon my torch will die and as I depart this world,  
He greets me in his grief-stricken madness,  
Reaching out, acceptance in his eyes,  
Once again almost reaching but never far enough,  
He goes without a farewell and leaves me forever.

By Owen Richards-Jones - Year 8



# SPRING Concert

On the 26th March our Spring Concert came into bloom, and what an incredible night it was for our students and staff. The audience watched in awe as some of our most talented musicians took to the stage, performing an array of pieces at the highest standard. Some of our peripatetic teachers attended and supported our students in orchestra, urban choir and piano duets. Their commitment and enthusiasm for music shine through the students at Anthony Gell.

The support from staff and students was second to none, which just emphasises the values which we hold at Anthony Gell. I would like to thank everyone who gave their time to support our students, without your efforts, our concert would not have been possible.

Mrs Marshall-Sims  
Music Teacher





# World Book Day

Celebrating the 7th March as World Book Day, Anthony Gell has had a week of exciting activities from enthralling quizzes to vivid art competitions; I can confidently say Anthony Gell has outdone itself this year!

Throughout the week there has been a variety of exuberant activities and entertaining endeavours. These included the 'Where's Wally Challenge' in which students scoured the school in pursuit of finding as many cut-out stickers of Wally as possible. The 'Masked Reader' was an amusing and baffling quiz in which a selection of five members of staff read a verse of their preferred book whilst wearing a mask (or a snapchat filter!). Students had to guess who was behind the elusive mask! With Mr Kelly featuring as a strawberry to everyone's amusement!

On the day, there was an incredible range of outfits as students and staff dressed up as characters from their favourite books. An absolute standout outfit was our own Director of Communication Mr Flint dressed as a hobbit. Highlights from the student participation included 'Bananas in Pyjamas, Little Red Riding Hood and Miss Trunchbull.

After the excitement of World Book Day, I sat down and interviewed Mr Flint to discuss why it was important for Anthony Gell to celebrate this literary festival. No longer dressed as a hobbit, I started with the question of how do you encourage people to participate in reading? His suggestions initially was to forget about books, find something you are interested in and start reading about that.

We read everyday; on our phones, TVs, magazines and posters so we are all already reading without even realising it. So forget your stubbornness and preconceptions and find something that matches your interests and start with that!

I am sure you agree that sounds like excellent advice. We all have favourite books, so I asked Mr Flint what recommendation he would have to Mr Kelly. He suggested Robert Burns poetry; he was a Scottish poet born in 1759 who is still celebrated today on Burns night, 25th January each year. So, in the words of Burns "Life is but a day at most" so get out there and start reading.

Ellie Barker - Year 11

