



NEWSLETTER



The 2024 Christmas Concert

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 1 - Year 11 Residential Trip
 Page 2 - The Positive Impact of Clubs at AGS
 Page 3 - Christmas Week
 Page 4 - Christmas Week
 Page 5 - Getting to Know our Staff, Year 7s Reflect on their First Term at AGS
 Page 6 - Careers Fair, KS3 Theatre Trip, Year 11 English Workshop
 Page 7 - A Year 9 Student's Achievements Outside of School, Remembrance Day
 Page 8 - Auschwitz Project
 Page 9 - Children in Need
 Page 10 - Christmas Concert
 Page 11 - Christmas Concert

Welcome from Mr Kelly

Welcome to another action-packed termly newsletter from AGS. I hope you enjoy reading the articles that have been chosen. The events that you'll see in this term's newsletter are a small fraction of the huge number which have taken place this term. It has been another term to be extremely proud of, with so much success in such a wide array of subjects and activities. I am very proud of all of our students and they continue to impress me every day with their talents, their thirst for knowledge and their level of care. This newsletter is dedicated to two of the AGS family who sadly passed away this term. Eve and Harlan will forever be remembered and will always be a part of AGS.

DIARY DATES

6th Jan	- Return to school after Christmas Break
9th Jan	- Year 9 Parents' Evening
16th Jan	- Year 9 Virtual Options Evening
20th Jan	- Year 11 and 13 Mock Exams Start
10th Feb	- KS3 Careers Week
14th Feb	- Break up for Half Term
24th Feb	- Return to School after Feb Half Term
13th Mar	- Year 11 Parents' Evening
27th Mar	- Sixth Form Parents' Evening
4th April	- Break up for Easter Holidays

Re-introducing RESIDENTIALS

Our current Year 11 group have got a busy year ahead of them; a set of mock exams in January, full exams in the Summer term, planning for life after Year 11, and then results day in August - all possibly stressful times as I am sure you can imagine.

Cast your minds back further to March 2020 and the events that occurred that year and how the year 6s at the time (now year 11s) did not get their rite of passage to a residential after their SAT exams. AGS decided now was their opportunity.



October this year, AGS took the current Year 11s away to sunny Yorkshire for two days of action-packed adventure including: zip wiring, crate stacking and buggy building. Add in an evening campfire and having a bunk room sleepover with your mates, what more could you want? The weather wasn't fantastic, but it was great to see everyone get involved with everything that was

thrown at them, giving an opportunity to let their hair down before the rest of this year kicks in. **Year 7s keep your eyes peeled - AGS are coming for you next with a similar adventure - filled opportunity!**

Mr Lomax
Trip Lead

“2 days of action-packed
adventure”



“an evening campfire and having a
bunk room sleepover with your
mates, what more could you want?”



GAME ON:

The Positive Impact of Warhammer and E-Sports Clubs at AGS

Written by Barnaby Sharratt, Year 13

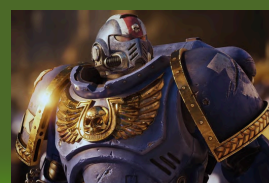


Warhammer club is one of the clubs offered at AGS, run by Sixth Form students: Barnaby Sharratt, Saul Curtis and Gaige Coupe. The club runs on Monday after school from 3.30-4.30pm, where people often sit and chat whilst painting models. This club also provides neurodiverse individuals with the ability to socialise in a safe and non-judgemental environment.

Warhammer is a general term for various games developed by Games Workshop, or GW, a UK-based company with headquarters in Nottingham. There are two main games, Warhammer 40,000, or 40k, and Warhammer Age of Sigmar. Warhammer 40,000 is set in the absurdly over-the-top 41st millennium, in which humanity has become a totalitarian state ruled by a corpse and excessive faith. They fight daily against a veritable smorgasbord of alien horrors, ancient deities, and the condensed power of their own bureaucracy. Warhammer Age of Sigmar is set in a high-fantasy setting, that is, elves, magic and other similar things.

Warhammer itself is centred around collecting and painting little plastic models, called miniatures. This may sound like it is incredibly tedious, but in all honesty, it is actually quite relaxing, especially the painting. The biggest barrier, at least in my opinion, to the hobby is that the very fancy pictures on the Internet showing beautifully painted models are often quite intimidating. However, I think that one of the greatest strengths of this hobby is that you can paint models however you want to. For example, to the right is a model I painted, which, at least in my opinion, looks rather good, although I would not consider myself a master painter by any means.

The AGS Warhammer club has been run intermittently for the past four years, and I have been an attendee since day one. As I am one of the main sixth formers involved with running the club now, it warms my heart to see even a few younger students enjoying this weird, nerdy, and absolutely neurodiverse group. Speaking as someone who suffered some degree of isolation in the lower school, having a club like this would have been wonderful, and it really does make me happy that this club exists so that people who perhaps might be isolated in their day-to-day school life have a place where they can express themselves.



The AGS E-sports club is a club where lots of people come together to play various games, such as Street Fighter 6, Mario Kart and, if the wonderful IT team can get it working, Minecraft.

The club has a sense of community that is wonderful to hear about, as the club has an overall very positive attitude, with the members often good-naturedly challenging each other to games. However, they do so in a positive way, with respect being a pillar of the community. In the buildup to Christmas, the club has been playing Mario Party to get into the Christmas spirit. In addition, E-sports club often plays games which foster teambuilding exercises, such as the game "One Shot Challenge", which the club apparently now has a full-blown notebook dedicated to solving the problems in.

As someone who often found socializing difficult in lower school, it brings me inexpressible joy to know that there are now clubs for people who, like me, may find the sporty side of school a little difficult. E-sports club has also been involved in school events, for example a couple of weeks ago they held a tournament to raise money for Children in need.

Christmas Week

Christmas Week at AGS was filled with exciting activities, performances, and opportunities for students and staff to come together in the spirit of the season. This year, the school embraced the holiday cheer with a variety of events that brought joy and creativity to the entire school community. Here's a look at the wonderful events that made this Christmas week so memorable:

The week kicked off with a spectacular performance by the 6th form students on Monday 2nd December, setting the tone for the rest of Christmas Week. Everyone came together at lunch time to support the performers and enjoy the festive atmosphere leaving everyone in the school feeling uplifted and full of Christmas spirit.



On Tuesday, the school hall transformed with the unveiling of the much-anticipated Christmas tree displays. Students took great pride in their creations, and it was a joy to see the unique styles and personal touches they brought to the trees, especially the tree dedicated to Eve, one of our students who sadly passed away recently. The display became a focal point for students and staff to gather, chat, and enjoy the holiday atmosphere.



Wednesday was filled with fun and festive energy as students and staff participated in Christmas Jumper Day. Everyone embraced the opportunity to wear their most festive attire, although it wasn't just about the fashion; the day also raised money for charity, adding an element of giving to the festivities.

Thursday brought another exciting performance, this time by our British Sign Language students. Lead by Mrs Repton, the performance was a heartfelt and inclusive event; the teachers and students worked together to present a moving rendition of A Million Dreams from The Greatest Showman, signing along to the lyrics while Mr Mosley performed on the piano. The performance left a lasting impression, reminding everyone of the importance of connection, no matter how it's expressed.



On Friday, the school hosted a vibrant Christmas market, bringing together a wonderful selection of festive goods and treats. Students set up stalls selling freshly baked goods, books and clothes. The market was a fantastic opportunity for students to practise entrepreneurship and creativity, and it provided a festive shopping experience for everyone. The market, which proved to be extremely popular, helped raise funds for school projects and charity, adding a sense of giving and community spirit to the week.

Christmas Week at school was a true celebration of creativity, togetherness, and the spirit of friendship. Each event, from the performances by students and teachers to the Christmas market and concert, brought something special to the school community. It was a time for students to showcase their talents, for staff to share in the joy, and for everyone to come together in the spirit of the season. This festive week not only highlighted the importance of tradition but also demonstrated the strength of community and the power of creativity in making Christmas a truly magical time of year. **Over all, Christmas Week at AGS raised over £445 for the diabetes department at Derby Children's Hospital, to help families afford essentials such as hypo treatment kits and bus fares.**



Some of our Year 8 boys kindly volunteering to model some of the outfits at the clothing stall at the Christmas Market.



Two Year 10's and Gail, our Catering Supervisor, with the cakes they baked together to sell at the Christmas Market.

Getting to know our Staff



Cristina Jackson

What is your role at AGS?

My role at AGS is a teacher of Design and technology.

What university did you go to?

I studied Textile Design at the University of Leeds and got my PGCE in secondary education at Nottingham Trent University.

Why did you want to become a teacher?

I wanted to become a teacher of Design and Technology as after 12 years in the textile industry working for various retailers, I wanted to share my love and passion for design and textiles with young people to help guide them in becoming the next generation of designers and creatives.

What do you do in your spare time?

In my spare time I like to spend time with my young family and I love to craft and cook.

If you had to summarise AGS in three words what would they be?

Supportive, Inclusive and Family.

Caroline Waterhouse



What is your role at AGS?

I am an Exams and Data Officer. I help Mrs Mosley organise lots of spreadsheets and sort all the invigilators we need for the exams.

What university did you go to?

I graduated from Bangor University in North Wales, with an honours degree in English. I moved there because I was a keen rock climber and I had lots of holidays on Anglesey as a child, so my three years at UCNW were a dream. I then did my teaching qualification at Aberystwyth University in mid Wales as it is close to the sea, which I love, and it allowed me to learn to Kayak.

Why did you want to become an exams assistant?

I started invigilating here at AGS last year and enjoyed the atmosphere, liked the pupils I met and found the staff friendly. I had given up teaching but decided it would be nice to be back in a school environment, so thought I would have a go at a new job – you're never too old to learn! Wirksworth is a lovely town and only a short drive from my home, so I also get the benefit of getting to know a different area.

What do you do in your spare time?

I have a motorhome and love to take off at weekends to explore new places with my dog, Kevin. He is great company on long walks and is very sociable in the pub! I sing in a choir, so I have also joined the AGS staff choir.

If you had to summarise AGS in three words what would they be?

Lively, varied and fun.

New Beginnings: Year 7s Reflect on Their First Term

One of the main subjects I have enjoyed is P.E, since I do lots and lots of athletics outside of school. Although the cross-country season was difficult, I still made it through (somehow). Since I am a competitive person, I pushed through and got a great result.

I really enjoyed being taught by Mr.

John as he is funny and is

interested in my outside of

school activities. Even though I

like to be active I like problem

solving. In maths I am keen on

expanding my skills and

learning new things such as

algebra and square root of

numbers. Building a maze in tech

has been a great project, since I have

been able to be independent and take things

further than I could a year ago. I am looking forward to

sporting competitions and what is next to come at my years at Anthony Gell.



Rose Taylor, Year 7

Joining Anthony Gell has been so fun and exciting. I love my lessons and the teachers are just brilliant. My favourite subjects are English, Drama, French, Art and History. All of

these subjects are fun, informative and you can

ask as many questions as you like. I love

that there isn't a uniform because you

can express yourself and your

character through your own

clothes. I love the different

personalities of all the staff and

the way all the lessons are

taught. I can't thank the pastoral

team enough for their kindness.

They are so lovely and helpful and

are the best at helping people find

their way if they are lost. Surprisingly, I

thought it would take me ages to learn where

everything is, but I found my way pretty easily. Everybody has

been so kind and welcoming and I honestly couldn't be happier.

Bibi Ottley, Year 7

Careers Fair

The school welcomed a wide range of exhibitors from the world of Higher Education, Apprenticeships, Further Education, and employment into school on Thursday 14th November for our Careers Fair. We hold the Careers Fair every two years and it is open to all students and their parents in Years 9 – 13. Students are able to meet with organisations and companies from the world of work and education, to think about and start to make informed choices about their future chosen pathways. Hundreds of students from Years 9-13 along with family members visited the stands which included amongst others: The University of Sheffield, Derby College, our very own Anthony Gell Sixth Form, as well as employers such as Wates Construction, the Police, the NHS, the RAF and a huge range of others. Exhibitors were impressed by the mature approach from our students as they considered their future options and pathways, as well as the way that students worked together with staff and their parents to make informed future decisions. Students who visited the Careers Fair reported that they felt better informed about their choices and were feeling more motivated and inspired about their future pathways.



The Careers Fair is one event amongst a very strong programme of Careers provision in school which means that all students receive Careers education, 1:1 interviews with an independent careers specialist, work experience opportunities as well as the development of Employability Skills both in and out of lessons. If you feel that you could contribute to our Careers Education provision in school then please contact me or Mrs Grindey.

Mrs Lowe - Assistant Headteacher

KS3 Theatre Trip

On Thursday 5th December, an excited group of nearly 70 students set off to see A Christmas Carol at Derby Theatre; a timeless classic that, whilst not a panto, promised to get us all into the Christmas spirit – both happily and spookily! And we were not disappointed!

The set was very well done, it consisted of three small and cramped Victorian houses which could be swung around to reveal various interiors, the music was haunting with live musicians and the Ghost of Christmas Future was a dark imposing figure whose Cello provided his deep and ominous voice. The students were impressed by the children acting in the performance and said it gave them something to aim for in their performances and they all agreed that Scrooge had been well cast as he was 'very mean!' Having been well entertained and eaten lots of sweets, we all returned to school ready to bring the joy of Christmas to all!

Mrs Hampton - Drama Teacher



Year 11 Workshop

We have been lucky enough to have had Derby Theatre into school to provide a drama workshop centred around A Christmas Carol, a key GCSE English Literature text for Year 11. Every Year 11 class has been involved and have been able to revise key characters, lines and parts of the play in an active, fun way. Booking these sessions was part of our ongoing quest to provide as many opportunities for students to develop their knowledge of these key texts as we can, leading up to firstly their mock exams and then ultimately their GCSE exams in May. Year 11 student Will Brown commented that, "The session was fun and was a bit different to normal lessons. It definitely felt like I was having to remember a lot of the text." Fellow Year 11 student Tess Kemp added that, "The drama tasks were interesting because we were having to really think about the characters and the key parts of the book. It was definitely worthwhile."

Mr Flint - Director of Teaching and Learning - Communicate

Year 9 Student Shines in National Endurance Riding Awards

Hollie Brewell, in Year 9, has achieved outstanding success in the world of endurance riding, earning national recognition at the Endurance Great Britain National Awards held recently in Leamington Spa. While Hollie herself is far too modest to highlight her achievements, her incredible accomplishments deserve to be celebrated.

This year has been a whirlwind for Hollie and her horse, as they competed in events across England and Wales. Despite facing the unpredictability of British weather, Hollie demonstrated remarkable determination, resilience, and courage, pushing herself and her horse to the very limits to finish a highly successful season.

Hollie's hard work and dedication paid off as she was crowned the Champion Junior Rider for 2024, officially recognized as the best young endurance rider in the UK. Adding to this already exceptional achievement, Hollie also secured the Reserve Champion Novice Horse title. This award is particularly impressive, as it meant competing against experienced adults with years of expertise in training young horses and guiding them through the challenging grading ranks.

Her accomplishments are a testament to her passion, dedication, and skill in a sport that requires not only physical endurance but also an exceptional bond with her horse.

Congratulations to Hollie on a phenomenal year—she is an inspiration to young riders everywhere and a shining star in the endurance riding community.



A Remembrance Day Reflection

To honor his great grandfather's legacy, Sebastian (pictured) visited his memorial on Remembrance Day, reflecting on the sacrifices he and others like him made.

Sebastian's great grandfather, Ernest Price, holds a remarkable place in history as a professional soldier who bravely served during the early days of World War I. In November 1914, Ernest was among the 80,000 British soldiers sent to Belgium, a contingent that would later become renowned for their involvement in the pivotal Mons campaign.

For his service during this historic campaign, Ernest received the Mons campaign bar, a prestigious recognition awarded to those who had participated in the initial battles on the Western Front. This bar symbolizes the resilience, courage, and sacrifice displayed by soldiers like Ernest during some of the most challenging moments of the Great War.

At AGS, we also marked Remembrance Day with a special performance of The Last Post by one of our talented students, followed by a respectful two-minute silence. This moment of reflection connected us all to the courage and sacrifice of past generations.

Ernest Price's story serves as a lasting reminder of the bravery and resilience of soldiers during World War I and continues to inspire us today.



'Lessons From Auschwitz' Project



On October 15th, four A-level history students had the opportunity to participate in the Lessons From Auschwitz Project, organized by the Holocaust Educational Trust. The experience included a day visit to a Jewish cemetery, Auschwitz I, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Despite the early start at East Midlands Airport, the trip provided a remarkable opportunity and served as a profound reminder of the tragedies that occurred during the Holocaust. In addition to this, we attended two seminars, both before and after our visit, where we had the privilege of hearing the remarkable story of Holocaust survivor, Eva Clark.

During our trip to Oświęcim, we had the rare opportunity to experience a Jewish cemetery and learn about their traditions and beliefs after death. After this, we witnessed the personal belongings confiscated from the Jewish community, walked along the infamous railway track, and observed the remains of the bunkers that had been destroyed. Following this, we attended a memorial service where we had the opportunity to read poetry composed during the Holocaust. A Rabbi also addressed us, providing valuable moments for reflection on what we had learnt. Overall, the project played as a vital reminder for what happened throughout the tragedies of the Holocaust and allowed us to increase our knowledge of the event further.

Poppy Vivian-Asgher, Year 12



CHRISTMAS *Concert*

Pages designed and written by William McCarthy and Poppy Vivian-Asgher, Year 12

On the 9th of December our Christmas Concert wrapped up following an evening of outstanding musical performances. Our talented students filled the night with a variety of impressive pieces, ranging from our A-Level Music students wombling away with, 'A Wombling Merry Christmas' to a sentimental piano rendition of Clair de Lune.

Harmony joined up with Junior Vocals, Staff Choir and Middleton Community Choir to spread the christmas spirit with an uplifting performance of 'Hark, Hark'. The participation of students, teachers (and even from the audience!) shows our true passion for music here at AGS.



The Christmas concert was a brilliant event. It demonstrated the enormous range of musical talent in our school! The massed choirs were fantastic. The development of skills from Rock School through to the A-Level music group shows just how amazing and inclusive music is Anthony Gell School.

Mr Williams-Hunter
Lead Practitioner of Inclusion



Children in Need 2024

Page designed and written by Fran Mauracheea and Molly Repton, Year 12

This November marked another brilliant show of Anthony Gell's signature spirit in the amazing turn out and support for the multiple Children in Need events that took place. A whopping total of £566.08 was raised across the school, showing just how involved the whole school was in donating and helping where they could. Multiple events took place over the course of the day, from a life-sized game of hungry hippos to an absolutely stellar accordion performance from the one and only ex-student Jonathan Baker accompanied by Jake McGuire on the saxophone, complete with chocolate muffins and rocky road from the cake sale that many students and teachers contributed to and enjoyed.



The sixth form students and teachers held a hungry hippos game in which many people had fun dragging each other round on skateboards (don't worry helmets were mandatory!) in what may have been the most intense life-sized board game that has ever been played. Everyone involved had a great time, whether playing or watching it was extremely entertaining, Year 12 student Ella Barnes said: "I enjoyed being part of this event, I think it is a very fun and effective way of helping charity", showing how the creative ways of helping charity that the Anthony Gell community were able to come up with were a massive success. Overall, the sixth form event contributed £220.69 to the grand total.

Head of Sixth Form, Mrs Moseley said, "It was brilliant to see sixth form students coming together and taking the lead to get creative and help charities".

Another brilliant event that took place was the E-Sports competition hosted by the IT team, where students enjoyed a range of video games, such as Mario Kart, Street fighters and many more. The tournament happened throughout the day, and students from across the school joined in with the fun, being able to share and participate in their hobbies and raising money at the same time, it was yet another successful and creative way that the Anthony Gell community showed their generosity and support of charities.



Students also volunteered to go between classrooms collecting money, and of course dressing up was encouraged as always! The money collected was given to the BBC Children in Need charity where it will go to help children in positions less fortunate, we are very grateful and proud that we are part of a community that recognises how lucky we are and will take any opportunity we can to help charities like this one. It is a brilliant place to be a part of and we look forward to next year's excitement!