



2024/25 COOKSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

A YEAR OF SUCCESS

Our pupils have seized opportunities to engage in a wealth of activities, from the excitement of the school production and the triumphs of our sports teams to the joy of concerts, competitions, and educational trips. These experiences do more than enrich school life; they often become the foundation of lifelong passions.

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PRINCIPALS FOREWORD



Welcome to the Cookstown High School magazine, a vibrant reflection of the events and activities that have shaped the academic year 2024–2025. This publication offers a glimpse into the diverse and enriching experiences that our pupils have embraced—though it is nearly impossible to capture the full scope of their enthusiasm, talent, and dedication.

Throughout the year, our pupils have seized opportunities to engage in a wealth of activities, from the excitement of the school production and the triumphs of our sports teams to the joy of concerts, competitions, and educational trips. These experiences do more than enrich school life; they often become the foundation of lifelong passions. It is wonderful to witness pupils discovering interests that may shape their future endeavours, friendships, and even careers.

Beyond the activities themselves, what truly stands out is the unwavering commitment of our staff, who consistently go above and beyond to create an inspiring and supportive environment. Their dedication, energy, and willingness to invest in pupils' holistic development make Cookstown High School a place where learning extends far beyond the classroom.

As you turn these pages, you will see the stories of hard work, creativity, and achievement that define our school community. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to both staff and pupils—without their contributions, none of these moments would have been possible.

I hope you enjoy reading about this extraordinary year and celebrating the achievements of our school

G J Evans
Principal

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF BOARD OF GOVERNORS



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this year's edition of the Cookstown High School Magazine. Looking through these pages you will be amazed at what our young people and staff have achieved over the last academic year. Of course we celebrated great academic results and personal achievements in the different departments again, but so much more happened and this yearbook captures everything perfectly - sporting triumphs, charitable endeavours and the revamping of our canteens. We had the Scarecrow Festival, the school production of Oliver, the Spring Concert and the fantastic hit that was The Masked Singer. Read items provided by some of the young people and look closely at all the pictures. As we look forward to the 70th anniversary of our school on the Coolnafranky Demesne and the 220th anniversary of the establishment of the school, please enjoy reading about all that took place during 2024/25, making Cookstown High School the ideal place to be educated, challenged, entertained and made welcome.

Mrs Lynne Dripps
Chairperson of the Board of Governors

STAFF FOCUS

PRINCIPAL
Miss G Evans BA (Hons) PGCE NPQH MCCT

VICE PRINCIPALS
Mrs C Allen BA (Hons) PGCE PQH(NI)
Mr A McGeown BSc (Hons) PGCE

SENIOR TEACHERS
Mrs F Gormley BMus (Hons) PGCE MEd FCIEA FISM ATCL(Rec)
Cert FSMus
Mr R Johnston BEd (Hons) MSC PQH(NI)
Mr L Forbes BA (Joint Hons) PGCE

ART
Mrs N McCabe BDes PGCE
Mrs J Boyle BA (Hons) PGCE
Mrs K Fields BA (Hons) PGCE
Mrs E Deering BDes (Hons) PGCE

BUSINESS STUDIES
Mrs D Foster BEd (Hons)
Mr L Stewart BSc (Hons) PGCE

ENGLISH
Mrs G McDonnell BA PGCE
Mr L Forbes BA (Joint Hons) PGCE
Miss A Black BA (Hons) PGCE
Miss L Hanna BA (Hons) PGCE
Mrs R Thompson BA PGCE
Mrs A Smyth BA PGCE

GEOGRAPHY
Mrs N Hagan BSc (Hons) PGCE
Dr H Kane BSc (Hons) PhD PGCE
Mrs C Porte BSc (Hons) PGCE

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
Mrs T McElhatton BSc PGCE
Mrs E Davidson BSc PGCE
Mrs F Gormley BMus (Hons) PGCE MEd FCIEA FISM ATCL(Rec)
Cert FSMus
Mrs L Johnston BA (Hons) QTS
Dr H Kane BSc (Hons) PhD PGCE
Mrs L Lee BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mr L Stewart BSc (Hons) PGCE

HISTORY
Mrs R Sloan BA PGCE
Mr J Henderson BA (Joint Hons) PGCE
Mr A McGeown BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mrs C Porte BSc (Hons) PGCE

HOME ECONOMICS
Mrs A Halliday BA (Hons) MSc PGCE Cert.Ind.St Cert.RE Cert.HP
Mrs L Lee BSc PGCE
Mrs E Davidson BSc PGCE

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Mr R Johnston BEd (Hons) MSC PQH(NI)
Mrs K McKenna BSc PGDFHE
Mrs J White BSc MSc PGCE

LEARNING for LIFE and WORK
Mrs N Cheevers BSc PGCE

LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE
Mrs K Fields BA PGCE
Mrs J Boyle BA (Hons) PGCE
Mrs L Stewart Murray BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mr J Hastings BSc PGCE

MATHEMATICS
Dr K Davidson BSc (Hons) PhD PGCE
Mr G Cuddy BEng (Hons) PGCE
Mrs H Graham BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mrs C Hall BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mrs Z Johnston BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mr B Lowe BEd (Hons)
Mrs J McMullan BEd (Hons)
Miss S Sinclair BEd (Hons)
Mr C Wilson BSc (Hons) PGCE PG Cert Careers Ed and Guidance

MODERN LANGUAGES
Dr A Ranchoux BA MA PhD PGCTHE PGCE MCP CIW
Mrs C Allen BA (Hons) PGCE PQH(NI)
Mrs C McFlynn BSc (Hons) PGCE Dip German, Cert Health & So-
cial Care

MUSIC
**Mrs F Gormley BMus (Hons) PGCE MEd FCIEA FISM ATCL(Rec)
Cert FSMus**
Mrs H Blackwood MBE MSc BMus PGCE Dip RS MCGI MInstLM

PHYSICAL EDUCATION
Mr M Haycock BSc MSc PGCE Dip Sports Psy
Mrs N Cheevers BSc PGCE
Mrs L Johnston BA (Hons) QTS
Miss R Kerr BSc PGCE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Mrs H Hamilton BEd
Mrs H Blackwood MBE MSc BMus PGCE Dip RS MCGI MInstLM
Mrs R Montgomery BEd (Hons)
Mr L Stewart BSc (Hons) PGCE

SCIENCE
Mr N Agnew MSc PGCE
Mrs R McMurray BSc PGCE
Mr P Williamson BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mrs H Brooks BEd
Mrs J Freeburn BA (Hons) PGCE Cert RE
Mr N Graham BSc (Hons) PGCE
Mr N Hastings BSc PGCE
Mr R McAdam MEng (Hons) PGCE
Mrs S White BSc (Hons) PGCE

TECHNOLOGY
Mr P Carson BEd PGCTE PGDTE
Mr G Cuddy BEng (Hons) PGCE
Mr S Donnelly BSc PGCE
Mrs R Harpur BEd (Hons)
Mr D McKenna BEd (Hons)

SENCo
Mrs J Crawford BMus (Hons) MEd PGCE Cert

HEADS OF YEAR
Year 8
Dr H Kane BSc (Hons) PhD PGCE
Year 9
Mr J Henderson BA (Joint Hons) PGCE
Year 10
Mrs J Freeburn BA (Hons) PGCE Cert RE
Year 11
Mr B Lowe BEd QTS
Year 12
Mr D McKenna BEd
Year 13 & 14
Mrs L Johnston BA (Hons) QTS

ADMINISTRATIVE & SUPPORT STAFF
Mrs K Anderson BA
Mrs J Boyd
Mrs S Brimage
Mrs L Brown
Mr R Brown
Mrs L Burton
Mrs A Currie
Mrs L Davidson BA (Hons)
Mrs E Donaldson
Mrs C Donnelly
Mrs D Duffin
Miss K Duffin
Mr I Faulkner
Mr T Ferguson
Mr A Forrest
Mrs C Gilmour BA
Mr B Gourley
Mrs J Harkness
Mrs L Harkness
Mrs D Hayes Adv Dip
Mrs D Hepburn BA DIS MSC
Mrs S Holmes Dip PCDP
Miss A Houston

Mrs J Hunter
Mrs L Johnston
Mr J Martin
Mrs M McGaughey
Mrs L Morrison PGCFHE
Mrs L Morton BEd PGCE
Mrs L Pinkerton
Mrs C Robinson
Mr D Stevenson
Mrs C Taylor
Mrs E Weir
Mrs L Wilson

BUILDINGS SUPERVISORS
Mr N Anderson
Mr K Rollins

CLEANING SUPERVISOR
Mrs M McLaughlin

GROUNDSMEN
Mr P Cross
Mr A Davidson

LUNCHTIME SUPERVISORS
Ms E Farrell
Mr I Faulkner
Mrs K Kelly
Mr J Martin
Ms K McCaughey
Mrs L Reid
Mrs R Smyton
Mrs M Speirs
Mrs M Thompson
Mr R Wilkinson

Names in **Bold** –Head of Department

STAFF - LEAVERS



Mr G Carleton
Technology

After 15 years of working alongside Gary Carleton, it's with mixed emotions that we bid farewell to a valued colleague and friend as he embarks on the next chapter of his international teaching journey.

Gary joined Cookstown High School in 2010 after graduating from Stranmillis University College, bringing with him a passion for Technology

and Design and a fresh enthusiasm for innovation and opportunity. Over his time at CHS, Gary made a lasting impact on both pupils and colleagues alike. A key highlight of Gary's time here was his development of the Formula 1 in Schools programme. Under his guidance, pupils not only competed but excelled—progressing from regional successes to representing the school on the national stage in London and Birmingham.

Ever forward-thinking, Gary later introduced Greenpower NI to Cookstown High School, guiding students to success in the very first year of the programme.

His contribution, however, extended well beyond the classroom. A passionate supporter of extra-curricular life, Gary was a committed football

coach throughout his entire time at CHS. A standout moment came when his Year 12 team won the Coleraine and District League title, a testament to his dedication and encouragement. Gary also played an important role in wider school life, accompanying pupils on numerous trips, including several visits with Sixth Form students as part of the School Aid Romania initiative—an experience that reflected his compassionate and community-minded nature.

Behind the scenes, Gary was instrumental in developing and maintaining strong ties with local businesses, helping to raise essential funds and ensuring the Technology & Design Department remained up-to-date with the latest equipment and resources. In 2021, Gary took a career break to teach in a British interna-

tional school in Abu Dhabi, later moving to Dubai in 2023/24. Upon his return to CHS in 2024, it was clear that his passion for international education remained strong. We are not surprised—but still a little sad—to see him take up a new opportunity abroad for the coming school year.

Gary leaves behind a legacy of innovation, opportunity, and inspiration. His presence in the department and across school life will be greatly missed, but we wish him every success and happiness in the adventures that lie ahead.

P Carson
Head of Department



Mrs H Brooks
Physics

This year, Cookstown High School bids a warm and grateful farewell to Mrs Helen Brooks, a highly respected Physics teacher, as she retires after decades of dedication to science education and the CHS community.

Helen's journey with CHS began as a pupil in the 1970's

(we don't want to totally give away her age!) but she was a pupil during the amalgamation of Cookstown High School and Cookstown Secondary Intermediate School in 1977. Her deep connection to the school came full circle when she returned in 2002 having begun her teaching career in England. She brought with her a wealth of experience and a passion for inspiring young minds.

Over the years, Helen taught Science and Chemistry, but her heart always belonged to Physics. As teacher in charge of Physics, she played a pivotal role in shaping the department – at one point even forming and leading the entire department as the only Physics teacher!

Mrs Brooks always enjoyed the applications of her subject. With plenty of equipment stockpiled, there was rarely a lesson where some practical work couldn't be squeezed in. With roles of wire, power supplies and the odd improvised invention, Physics lessons were always applied and the content seen in action.

Helen's commitment to high-quality teaching has been unwavering. She supported and mentored colleagues with care, precision, and generosity, earning a reputation as a meticulous, hard-working, and deeply caring colleague. Her presence in the staffroom and classroom alike will be sorely missed.

Beyond science, Helen also shared her creative talents through a successful Needlework Club, where she nurtured pupils' skills and confidence in a different kind of craft – always giving freely of her time and energy to enrich school life.

As she steps into retirement, we thank Mrs Brooks for her extraordinary service, her passion for Physics, and her unwavering dedication to CHS. She leaves behind a legacy of excellence, kindness, and inspiration.

We wish her every happiness in the exciting chapter ahead.



Mr N Agnew
Physics

After twelve years of service, Cookstown High School bids a fond farewell to Mr Nathan Agnew as he leaves to take up the position of Head of Physics at The Royal School

Armagh – his former school. Mr Agnew joined CHS in September 2012 as a Physics and Science teacher and quickly became a valued member of the Science Department. In recent years, he took on the role of Curriculum Leader for Physics, shaping the learning journey of countless pupils with his energy, clarity, and dedication.

Beyond the classroom, Mr Agnew made a lasting impact through his commitment to extra-curricular life. He played a central role in running the

Science Club for Year 8 and 9 pupils, where his memorable rocket experiments became legendary, sparking curiosity and excitement among younger students.

As House Leader of Drum, Mr Agnew was a constant source of enthusiasm and encouragement. His support on Sports Day – complete with a marquee, refreshments, and his signature oranges for Drum participants – epitomised his team spirit and dedication to pupil well-being.

Mr Agnew also led pupil teams in the prestigious ABP Angus Youth Challenge, achieving remarkable success. Under his guidance, groups reached the semi-finals of the competition for five consecutive years, reached the finals twice, and notably secured a victory – winning 10 Angus calves for their efforts.

A gifted technician as well as teacher, Mr Agnew managed sound and lighting for many school events, including Spring Concerts and School

Shows. His reliability and creativity behind the scenes, alongside his signature tradition of supplying sweets to his team, made him an indispensable part of CHS's performing arts productions. His commitment to pupils' personal development extended further still. He helped organise and host the Journey2Where Bible exhibition for Year 10 pupils annually – an event that has become a valued feature of the school's spiritual life. He also faithfully supported and contributed

to the Junior Scripture Union during his time in CHS.

In his role supporting STEM enrichment, Mr Agnew organised and took part in a variety of trips and competitions, including the STEM Enthusiast Partnership with Holy Trinity College – encouraging collaboration, innovation, and aspiration in STEM education across the local area.

Reflecting on his time in CHS, Mr Agnew shared: "I have really enjoyed my time

at Cookstown High School and am extremely sad to be leaving. I wish all the amazing staff and pupils every success for the future."

Mr Agnew leaves with the respect, affection, and best wishes of the entire school community. We are grateful for his many contributions, and we wish him every blessing and success as he begins this new chapter as Head of Physics in The Royal School Armagh.

STAFF - LEAVERS



Mrs H Blackwood
Music

Mrs Blackwood has been teaching in the Music Department for over 25 years, and in that quarter of a century, she has inspired and guided hundreds, if not thousands, of pupils in Music, RE, Duke of Edinburgh and musical ex-

tra-curricular activities. She leaves CHS at the end of June 2025 to embark on a new stage of her teaching career, with the Cadet Vocational College, working across all organisations, Army, Air, Sea, Police, Fire Service, St John Ambulance as well as with the Gibraltar Academy of Music and Performing Arts. This job will allow her flexibility to spend time with her family, an aspect of life that is hugely important to her.

In addition to teaching Music, Mrs Blackwood has also taught Religious Education to GCSE level, LLW, PD, Careers and Mathematics.

Over the decades in CHS, Mrs Blackwood has directed a range of musical activities: Concert Wind Band, Samba Band, Junior Choir, Pipe Band and more recently a Corps of Drums for fluters and drummers. At times Mr Blackwood has come into school to assist Mrs Blackwood, adding in bass guitar or euphonium to ensembles under her direction. Mrs Blackwood also used her skills in the School Production Orchestras, playing a variety of woodwind instruments as needed. Her adaptability meant that the changing interests of pupils were catered for in the Music Department. Mrs Blackwood also brought organisations into school to

increase pupil's awareness of Music on a grander scale, most recently the visit in March by musicians from the Ulster Orchestra.

Pupils who have been taught by Mrs Blackwood will remember her care for them as individuals, and at times her interesting approach in lessons: I know that she has demonstrated how instruments work by placing the mouthpiece of a brass instrument into a chair leg and then playing the chair! CHS will miss Mrs Blackwood, but we wish her all the very best for the next chapter of her story in Music Education.



Mr P Williamson
Chemistry

Mr Williamson was appointed as Teacher of Chemistry in 2003, and so began a long career in the Chemistry House, Block 5.

After the retirement of Ms Pam Hanna who was the Head of Chemistry, Mr Williamson was appointed to take over the running of the department. He has worked with several Chemistry colleagues, but his true sidekick was surely Dr Morgan. They were very

different, but their skills and approaches complemented each other perfectly. They were a great double-act.

Over the years, Mr Williamson has been involved in extra-curricular sport at CHS. As an avid Arsenal fan, he picked up a few things, and he led school football teams to success. While he eventually had to give up the football training at school, his love for Arsenal has never waned. Despite suffering ridicule in the staff room, he continued to cheer on his London-based team, heading to matches on Saturdays when he could. In addition to football, Mr Williamson also assisted with boy's rugby and helped to enthuse and train groups of boys who enjoyed a good level of success in tournaments. He even tried his hand at school cricket. Mr Williamson enjoys

building positive relationships with the pupils at CHS and sports is an excellent way to do this; many boys will recall the fun, wit and banter from those times Mr Williamson stood with them, in rain or shine.

Mr Williamson has also served as a mentor to Year 12 pupils over the past 10 years, a role that he has enjoyed, and that has been vital in giving support to those who need it most. His insight and friendly approach have made the difference at times for those pupils.

The legacy Mr Williamson leaves can be seen in the past pupils who have gone on to study Medicine, Chemical Engineering, Biochemistry, Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine, as well as many other STEM-related subjects.

His love and knowledge of his subject has inspired a generation.

Mr Williamson will be missed in CHS, and the fact he is leaving is almost 'unbelievable'...a word he frequently uses! But we wish him all the very best for the future. The motto of the Arsenal Football Club is 'Victoria Concordia Crescit', which means 'Victory Through Harmony'. I hope that as Mr Williamson reflects on his years at CHS, he will conclude that victory through harmony was the hallmark of his time at CHS too.

STAFF - NEWCOMERS



Miss A Black
English

I have grown up in Cookstown, and attended Cookstown High School as a student. During my time here as a pupil I studied English Literature, History, Geography and Spanish at A-Level. I also enjoyed the extra-curricular side of CHS, as a member of the choir, Scripture Union and Eco Team, and I took part in several school productions, either acting on-stage or behind-the-scenes.

I completed my degree in

English at Queen's University Belfast in 2020, before spending a year as a classroom assistant at Holy Trinity College. I then moved to Nottingham to complete my PGCE in English at the University of Nottingham. I have spent the past two years teaching at Drumglass High School in Dungannon, and joined the English department of CHS this year, teaching English, Literacy and Drama.

Outside of school, I like to keep myself busy by reading, taking my dog for walks, planning my next holiday, and being a Sunday School teacher.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year teaching at Cookstown High School, getting to know all the pupils and being able to teach in such a welcoming environment that has so much to offer. I look forward to coming back next year to get involved with more exciting opportunities!



Mrs J Boyle
LSC

I grew up in the countryside, just outside the sleepy vil-

lage of Caledon and was educated at City of Armagh High School. I studied Business at GNVQ/A-level and completed my Bachelor of Arts degree in Business at Ulster University. I then worked in the Human Resources department at Mid Ulster District Council before deciding to go into teaching. I completed my PGCE at the University of Bedfordshire, England.

My love for working in SEND was ignited by my PGCE lec-

turer who observed that I flourished in the classroom when teaching pupils with additional needs. I pursued this career path and have had the privilege of working in a variety of specialist settings, as well as being an Advisory Teacher for the EA Autism Advisory and Intervention Service.

Over the past 5 years, I have worked in City of Armagh High School's Specialist Provision, teaching in the Autism

Specific and Learning Support classes.

I now live in the Mid Ulster area with my husband, two girls and Dalmatian dog, Delilah. I enjoy travelling, eating out and spending time with my family.

I'm excited to begin this new chapter at Cookstown High School and look forward to the opportunities and experiences that lie ahead.



Miss E Turbitt
Art

Growing up in county Armagh, I always really loved Art and anything creative from a very young age and knew that Art was something I wanted to pursue! After A levels, I went to Dundee University to undertake a general foundation

year in Art and Design, which was then followed by completing a bachelor's degree in design specialising in Illustration and communicative design.

Following graduation, I worked on a number of Illustration commissions for businesses both here in Northern Ireland and in Scotland. I loved being able to work independently on these projects- but I missed working face to face with others and the creative buzz of a busy studio space. This is when I decided to try teaching- and began my PGCE in Secondary Art and Design at Ulster University in Coleraine. During

my first teaching placement over three years ago, I realised how much I loved the energy of a busy working classroom and the challenge and rewards of watching pupils' confidence and skills grow. It was then that I knew teaching Art and Design was for me! I started teaching at Cookstown High School September 2024- it's been a fantastic experience and I have been made to feel thoroughly welcome from day one. Throughout the year I've loved getting to know the students and sharing my passion for Art.

One of the highlights of my year has been starting the school's after school Art Club,

which I really enjoy running each week.

Outside of school, I enjoy getting out for hikes and painting landscapes inspired by the beautiful scenery we enjoy around the country. I also enjoy crocheting and sewing in my spare time.

I'm looking forward to returning to Cookstown High school in the new term as Mrs Deering after getting married in August this year- and cannot wait for another year of events, opportunities and creativity in the Art Department!

EXTENDING A LEVEL



Pupils with 1+ Grade A at A2 level

THESE RESULTS ARE THE PRODUCT OF HARD WORK, RESILIENCE, AND AMBITION, AND THEY OPEN THE DOOR TO AN EXCITING RANGE OF OPPORTUNITIES

A Level Excellence at Cookstown High School

Cookstown High School is celebrating another superb year of A Level success, with pupils once again achieving results that reflect the school's strong tradition of academic excellence and high expectations.

This year's outcomes were extremely positive, with 37% of grades awarded at A or A* and 56% of all results at A–B*. These results ensure that the majority of pupils have secured their

first-choice university places, competitive apprenticeships, or further education opportunities, confirming the school's position above the Northern Ireland average for top grades.

Academic Strength Across the Curriculum

Performance was strong across a broad range of subjects, with several departments achieving a 100% A–C pass rate*, including Art and Design, English Literature, Health and Social Care, History, Home Economics, ICT,

and Religious Studies. These outcomes highlight the breadth of provision at Cookstown High School and the quality of teaching and learning experienced by pupils.

Recognising Individual Achievement

A number of pupils excelled with top individual results, securing at least three A* or A grades:

- Rachel Brown – AAA
- Leah Caskey – A*AA
- Sophie Dornan – AAA
- Bethany Gillespie – AAA
- Grace Harkness – AAA
- Theo Thompson – AAAB



Pupils with 3+ Grade A at A2 level

- Peter McLean – AAA

Such achievements reflect both the ability and the commitment of the pupils, alongside the dedication of the staff who supported them throughout their studies.

Principal's Reflection

Principal, Miss Gwyneth Evans, commented: "These results are the product of hard work, resilience, and ambition, and they open the door to an exciting range of opportunities for our young people. I congratulate every pupil on their success, thank our staff for their tireless commitment, and acknowledge the vital encouragement of parents and families. It has been a privilege to see this Year 14 group flourish, and I am delighted that so many have secured places at leading universities or embarked on competitive apprenticeships."

Learning and Leadership

Cookstown High School remains committed to providing an education that extends well beyond examination

outcomes. Pupils benefit from leadership opportunities, an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, and strong partnerships with local and national employers and universities. The combination of academic success and wider personal development reflects the school's ethos and its commitment to preparing young people for the future. The accomplishments of this year's A Level pupils underline not only the high standards expected at Cookstown High School, but also the determination of its young people to meet those expectations. As they move on to the next stage of their education or careers, they do so equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to contribute positively to society and pursue their ambitions with confidence.



Pupils with 3+ Grade A at AS level

EXAMS A LEVEL



Pupils with 3+ Grade A at AS level



Pupils with 2+ Grade A at A2 level



Pupils with 2+ Grade A at AS level



Pupils with 5+ Grade A or above

ALMOST HALF OF ALL GRADES ACHIEVED WERE A–B*

Cookstown High School is delighted to celebrate another year of outstanding GCSE results, with pupils achieving exceptional outcomes across a wide range of subjects.

This year's results were excellent:

- 31% of all grades were at A/A*
- Almost half of all grades achieved were A–B*
- 88% of pupils secured five or more A–C grades*
- 75% achieved five A–C grades including English and Mathematics*

These fantastic outcomes continue the school's tradition of academic excellence and provide a strong foundation for pupils moving on to A Level and

BTEC study within our thriving Sixth Form.

Celebrating Pupil Achievement

Principal Miss Gwyneth Evans warmly praised pupils and staff: "We are immensely proud of the achievements of our pupils in this year's GCSE examinations. These results are a testament not only to the ability and determination of our young people, but also to their resilience and character, especially as they have faced the pressures and challenges of public examinations with courage and commitment. Their success reflects the hours of dedication they have given to their studies and the way they have embraced the opportunities available to them here at Cookstown

High School."

Miss Evans also paid tribute to the dedication of staff and the support of parents, recognising the partnership that underpins success at CHS.

Outstanding Individual Performances

Twelve pupils achieved particularly impressive results:

- Maddison Badger – 9 A*s
- Emma Cahoon – 7 A*s and 2 As
- Linda Cocks – 9 As
- Annabelle Davidson – 5 A*s and 4 As
- Alice Graham – 9 As
- Alex McKenna – 1 A* and 8 As
- Rachel McQueen – 4 A*s and 5 As
- Keith Otterson – 3 A*s and 6 As
- Emma Reed – 2 A*s and 7 As
- Jack Suitor – 3 A*s and 6 As
- Nikola Tihomirova – 4 A*s and 5 As
- Leah Whinnery – 6 A*s and 3 As



Pupil with 9A* GCSEs

Departmental Strength

Departments across the school enjoyed great success, with more than half of grades at A–B* in subjects including: Agriculture, Applied ICT, Business Studies, Chemistry, Digital Technology, Geography, Health & Social Care, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Physics, Religious Studies, Music, French, Design & Technology, and English Literature.

More Than Exam Results

While academic achievement is central to school life, Cookstown High School places equal importance on building confidence, character, and responsibility in every pupil. From a wide range of clubs, sports, and cultural activities to opportunities for leadership and service, pupils

benefit from experiences that prepare them for life beyond school. Strong links with local employers, community organisations, and universities further enhance these opportunities.

Guided by our Christian ethos and the school motto Virtus Cum Scientia — "Character through Knowledge", CHS believes in nurturing every individual's talents and encouraging them to aim high, support others, and contribute positively to the world around them.

This year's GCSE results are not just a reflection of hard work in the classroom, but also of the values that shape our school community. The achievements of the 2025 cohort are a source of great pride for everyone connected with Cookstown High School.



Pupils with 6+ Grade A or above



Pupils with 8+ Grade A or above



Pupils with 7+ Grade A or above



Pupils with 9+ Grade A or above



A Year of Inspiring Art Activities

ART

It's been a colourful and creative year filled with exciting art events for pupils and staff alike. From painting to pottery, and artist talks to museum visits, our art programme has offered something for everyone.

In August, staff enjoyed a relaxing wellbeing pottery session, where they had the chance to try hand-building techniques in a calming environment. It was a great way to unwind and explore creativity outside the classroom.

In September, the Courtauld Institute visited and delivered a fascinating talk in the lecture theatre for our A-level and Year 10 pupils on the artwork that they have in their gallery. The presentation focused on careers in the arts and studying art history, sparking new interests, and raising big questions about life after school.

In October, GCSE and A-level pupils travelled to the Seamus Heaney Centre in Bellaghy for a special artist talk with Sarah Longley. The session explored the connections between visual art and poetry, inspiring students to think about storytelling in their own work.

Also in October, we held a Shared Education acrylic painting workshop led by artist Feilin Campbell. Pupils from Holy Trinity College came together to create bold and expressive pieces using vibrant colours and dynamic brushwork. Our annual Credit Union art competition brought out the best in pupils' creativity. We were thrilled



to have one of our talented pupils Jamie Ferguson year 10 achieved first place, a proud moment for the whole school community.

In November, pupils took part in another Shared Education workshop, this time exploring the world of textiles. Artist Andrea Hayes led a fantastic wet felting workshop, teaching students how to blend colour and texture using wool.

Starting in November a Belfast community group called Wheelworks came to the school. Their aim was to help children in rural areas to explore their creativity. To help with this, five fun art workshops were held after school every Thursday from 4 to 6pm. An art cart lorry came

“

WE HELD A SHARED EDUCATION ACRYLIC PAINTING WORKSHOP LED BY ARTIST FEILIN CAMPBELL.



to the school, and pupils took part in exciting activities like drawing games, graffiti, and digital art. Later, there was a special cross-community day at The Jungle, where pupils joined with pupils from Holy Trinity School. Finally, there was a last workshop day where everyone worked together to finish their creative projects.

Later that month, a group of students went on a Shared Education trip to the Ulster Museum to view the Royal Ulster Academy (RUA) exhibition. As part of the day, they attended a talk by exhibiting artist Joanna Moules, who shared insights into her creative process and inspiration.

The new year started with hands-on creativity in January, as students attended a ceramic slab-building workshop at Holy Trinity College. They learned how to shape and build clay into both functional and decorative forms.

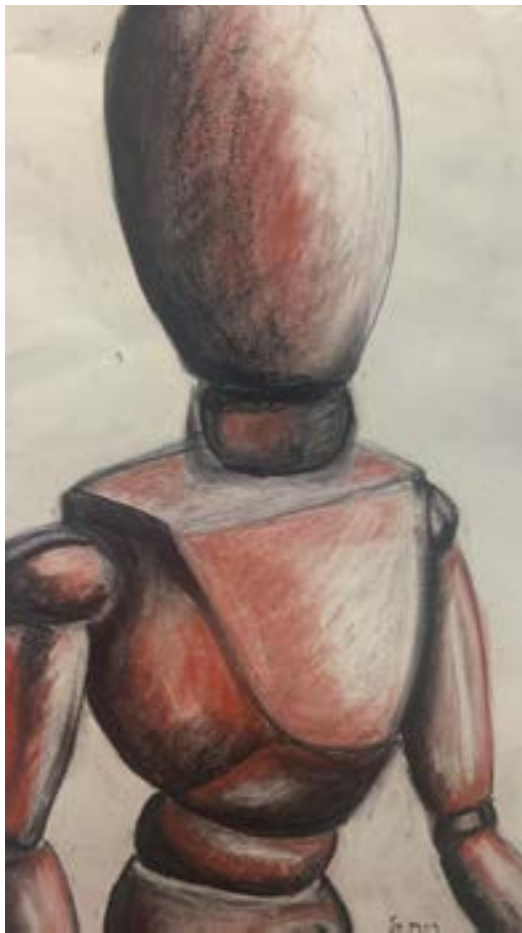
In June Art class 8P3 and LSC Juniors participated in a virtual tour of the Sir John Soane's Museum, London by the museum curator. This was completed using the Microsoft Teams platform. This was a pilot and CHS is the first school in the UK to have a virtual tour from this museum. It was a great opportunity for our pupils to experience a museum tour and learn about all types of art in the museum collection, from paintings to Greek and Egyptian sculpture.

Throughout the year, our weekly Art Club has continued every Wednesday after school, providing a space for pupils to experiment, develop

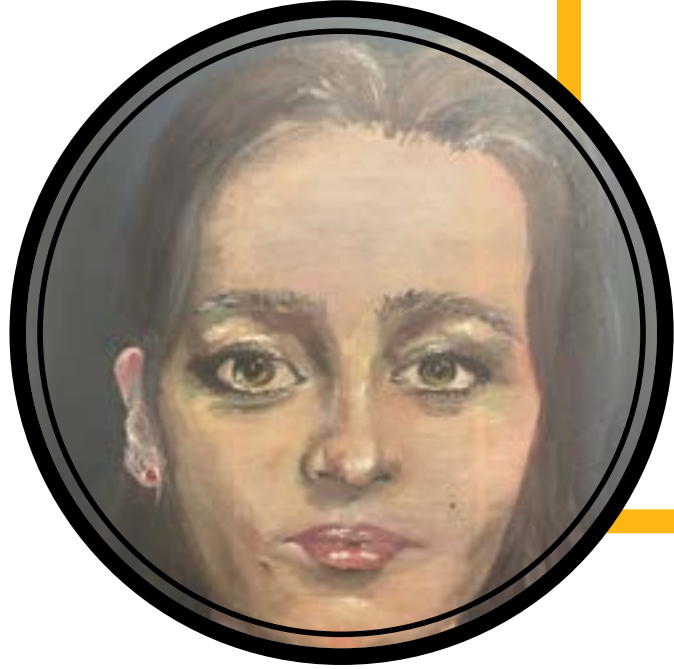
their portfolios, and enjoy time with friends. Meanwhile, our Crochet Club meets every Tuesday lunchtime, where students learn stitching techniques and make their own handmade pieces.

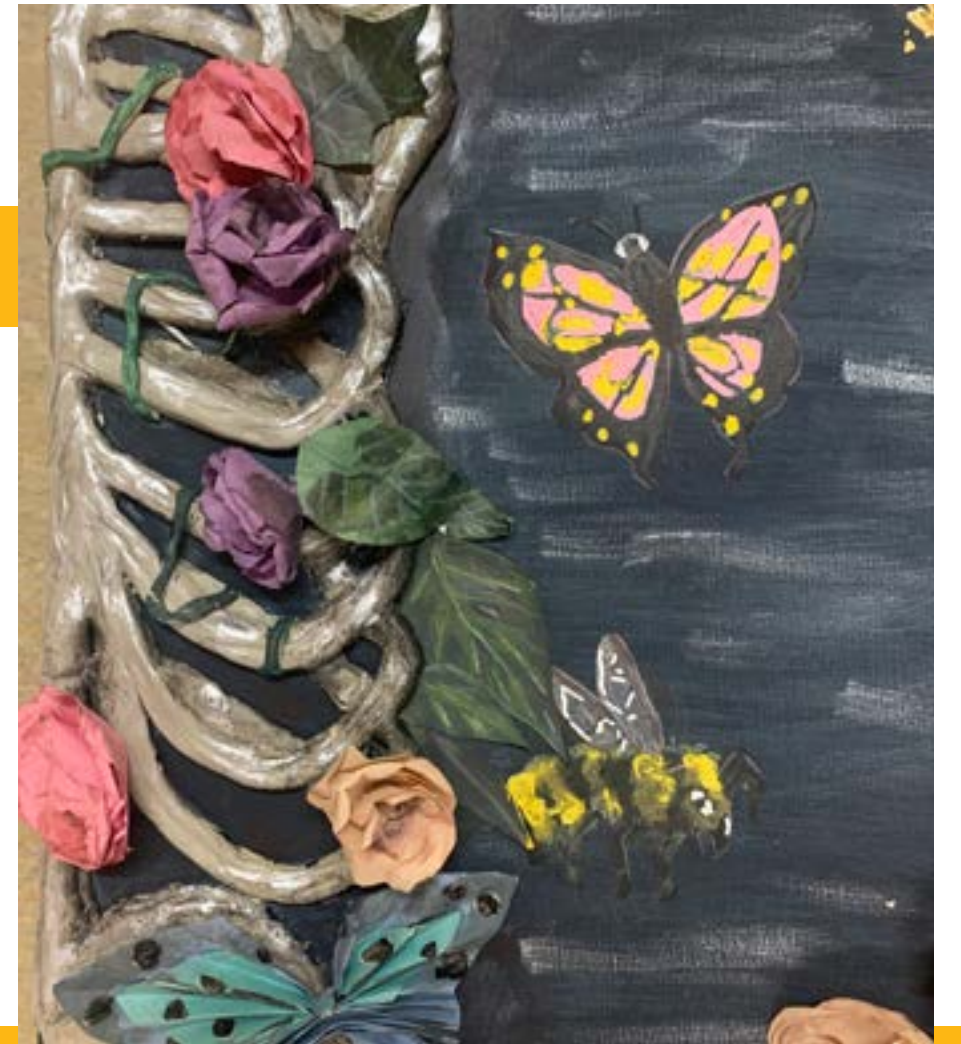
All these activities have helped bring art to life and build connections across year groups and schools. Whether trying something new or deepening their skills, pupils and staff alike have been inspired to create, reflect, and share. We look forward to even more creativity next year!

Mrs McCabe
Curriculum Leader Art and Design



“ WE PARTICIPATED IN A VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE SIR JOHN SOANE’S MUSEUM, LONDON BY THE MUSEUM CURATOR. THIS WAS A PILOT AND CHS IS THE FIRST SCHOOL IN THE UK TO HAVE A VIRTUAL TOUR FROM THIS MUSEUM







BUSINESS STUDIES

YEAR 14 CEMCOR VISIT

On Monday, 4th November 2024, the Year 14 Business Studies class embarked on an insightful educational trip down the road to Cemcor, a leading cement manufacturing company based here in Cookstown. The visit provided a unique opportunity for students to connect classroom theory with real-world business practices.

The trip began with a guided tour of Cemcor's production site, where students witnessed the intricate processes involved in cement manufacturing. From raw material handling to final packaging, the tour offered a behind-the-scenes look at industrial operations on a large scale.

Following the site tour, students attended a detailed presentation delivered by members of the Cemcor management team. The session covered a range of key business concepts, aligning closely with the A-level curriculum. Topics included the impact of government policies on business operations, the influence of globalisation on sourcing and distribution, and the importance of innovation in maintaining competitive advantage.

A significant focus was placed on Cemcor's commitment to sustainability, with discussions highlighting their investment in eco-friendly technologies and strategies for reducing carbon emissions. The

company also shared its long-term vision for growth and the role of strategic investment in achieving these goals.

Pupils were particularly engaged during the Q&A session, where they asked how businesses adapt to economic and environmental challenges. Overall, the trip was a valuable learning experience, enhancing students' understanding of the dynamic factors that influence modern business. It was a practical and inspiring day that left many students considering future careers in industry and enterprise, marvelling at what can be achieved from right here in Cookstown!

Thank-you to all at Cemcor who were involved.



TAYTO TOUR



On the 21st and 22nd of January 2025, our Year 11 Business Studies students took a tasty step out of the classroom and into the heart of Northern Ireland's snack industry with a two-day visit to the famous Tayto Factory.

The trip, which was split across two days



to accommodate all students, aimed to bring the business curriculum to life by showing real-world applications of production, marketing, and quality control. Tayto, known for its iconic crisps and snacks, welcomed students with open arms—and plenty of free samples!

The visit kicked off with a guided tour of the production line, where students saw how raw potatoes are transformed into

BUSINESS STUDIES

the nation's favourite crisps. From slicing and frying to flavouring and packaging, the process provided a brilliant visualisation of mass production methods and efficiency in action.

real-world relevance of their studies and sparked lively discussions back at school about business operations, consumer behaviour, and innovation in the food industry.

A big thank you to Tayto



for their hospitality and insights!

Students also learned about the business strategies behind Tayto's success, including their approaches to product development, branding, and customer loyalty. The factory's team shared insights into how Tayto responds to changing consumer tastes and competition, tying in perfectly with classroom topics like market research and the product life cycle. One of the highlights of the trip, naturally, was the chance to sample a variety of Tayto products straight from the source—an experience that was both educational and delicious.

This trip helped students see the



ULSTER UNIVERSITY VISIT CHEMISTRY



In addition to the practical session, students were taken on an informative tour of the Pharmacy and Diabetes research facilities. This gave them insight into some of the cutting-edge work being carried out at the university and highlighted the many career paths available within the fields of healthcare and pharmaceutical sciences.

Students also had the unique opportunity to get a sneak peek of a first-year undergraduate laboratory lesson. Later in the day, a first-year Pharmacy student led the group on a tour of the on-campus student accommodation, offering valuable insight into student life at Ulster University and helping to demystify the transition from school to higher education.

We would like to express our sincere

thanks to Dr Heather Nesbitt, Dr Peter McPherson, and Mr Iain Jack for their time, enthusiasm, and expertise. Their efforts in guiding our students through the laboratory session, sharing their knowledge, and providing a comprehensive tour of the facilities were greatly appreciated. Experiences such as this are incredibly valuable in inspiring the next generation of scientists and helping students make informed choices about their futures.



YEAR 13 AND 14 STUDENTS ATTENDED AN EXCITING AND EDUCATIONAL VISIT TO THE ULSTER UNIVERSITY CAMPUS



On Friday 29th November, a group of Year 13 and Year 14 A-Level Chemistry students from Cookstown High School, accompanied by Mrs White, joined with Year 13 Life and Health Science pupils from Magherafelt High School, accompanied by Mrs Jordan, for an exciting and educational visit to the Ulster University Coleraine Campus.

This joint school trip provided students with an invaluable opportunity to explore the

world of higher education in the sciences. The day began with a warm welcome from staff at the university, followed by a hands-on laboratory session where pupils had the chance to carry out experimental techniques used in the synthesis of Aspirin. This engaging practical activity not only broadened their scientific understanding but also gave them a taste of the kind of laboratory work involved in university-level study.



thanks to Dr Heather Nesbitt, Dr Peter



English

9CA Shakespearean Taverns

9CA were set the task of creating menu for their very own Shakespearean Tavern! They included traditional food eaten in Elizabethan England, Shakespearean language and some lovely drawings.



Wanted Posters

8HB Create 'Wanted' Posters for Kissin' Kate Barlow
8HB showed off their fantastic drawing skills as they created 'Wanted' posters for the outlaw Kissin' Kate Barlow, from their novel study 'Holes'. Harry Cowden, Ross Balmes, Patrick Zeman and Johan Varghese in particular went to the extra effort of colouring in or tea-staining their posters to give them a really authentic look!

ACT OUT SHAKESPEARE INSULTS!

Students in 9CB enjoyed the opportunity to learn some Shakespearean insults and to produce a conversation using these insults with a partner.
Phrase such as "Ye lack-brained double-dealer" and "Ye paltry hare-brained candle-maker" gave the students (and the teacher) a giggle and the students enjoyed a more 'fun' aspect to Shakespeare.

Sunkissed Serenity!

I woke up, unaware of my surroundings whilst being smothered in the surrounding darkness, to the deafening soul of my hellish alarm. I took a deep breath to collect my thoughts, I noticed the moon shining in brightly, illuminating the room. I felt comforted by its company. Like a lightbulb turning on, I realised today was special. It was the day I was flying to Spain! I couldn't wait. I jumped out of bed, turned out the light and got dressed at the speed of a bullet. As I darted out of my room, I noticed my whole family standing, waiting for me, their faces all filled with an indescribable joy. I couldn't wait!

When we entered the airport, pandemonium reigned in the main lobby as people scurried along looking for their terminal, as the same monotone voice read out the flight times. Getting through security was as much of a pain as usual. Yet that could not even dampen my mood. I felt on top of the world! As we approached the plane, the engines roared like a lion and seemed to shake the earth to its core. After a period of indulgent reminiscence, my parents hurried me aboard the plane. Outside, the sky was still as dark as coal, and the stars shone like delicate diamonds; the lavish, mellow glow of the city lights below twinkled gently as though it were gold. I found myself hypnotised by the sensational spectacle, it almost appeared idyllic for a few moments. I allowed myself to slip into the warm embrace of sleep as the comforting scenery filled my head.

Suddenly, I was violently shaken awake by my younger brother Isaac, who was laughing like a hyena at the surprised look upon my face. He pointed out the window excitedly. It took my eyes a few moments to adjust to the bright tent of blue dotted with cotton candy clouds. As I looked down, as though by magic, a captivating tableau of small green fields and steeped villages spread across an undulating landscape, like a shaken-out quilt

just settling back onto a bed. As I stepped out, I felt the warm air wrap itself around me like a warm hug. As I looked around, I noticed all the buildings were full of colour, plants, and life. It didn't seem real! It felt no more real to me than Narnia or Neverland.

The city streets were full of life. People were darting in and out of stalls, shops and restaurants so quickly that life began to feel like a blur. Everything around me was a new experience: the culture, the people, the animals. My head felt as though it would split in half while trying to process all of this. Tentatively, my family and I move forward, trying to zig-zag our way towards the turquoise that appeared to go into the world's end. With each step, I could feel the sweltering summer sun scorching the ground beneath me. AS we stepped out through the masses, I took a deep breath and allowed the warm salty air to spiral around me as the wind whipped wildly, it whined and whistled through the winding promenade. We grabbed food from a local restaurant and watched as the boats bobbed up and down upon the turquoise apparition of the sparkling waves, which crashed and consumed the fading coastline. The scene was like something out of a film. It was perfect!

As the crimson clock of the saintly sunset sky ticked on, the noise of the city faded into a faint hum. I could hear an angelic melody twinkle gently from one of the nearby gift shops, the dainty tune danced and drifted into the still air. I wish moments like these could last forever. However, my moment of tranquillity was shattered as my dad announced it was time to head back to our auspicious accommodation. I felt as though a heavy weight was tugging on my heart. Would any day of my holiday be as perfect as this one?

Maddison Badger Yr 12



FRENCH

GCHQ COMPETITION

Mrs McFlynn had many entries from Year 10 pupils to compete in the national GCHQ competition on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th November 2024. Well done to all the pupils who worked in teams online to crack codes and complete various missions!

Some of our competitors are photographed:
10CA: Ethan, Marcus and Luke.

10CB: Alanda, Emily, Briana and Rachel.



BBC CHILDREN IN NEED

A fantastic £64.83 was raised for BBC Children in Need. Mrs McFlynn would like to thank pupils and staff who supported the worthy event by purchasing Pudsey pens, Pudsey pin badges and making donations. Thank you all for your support.

children
in Need



A group of people in wetsuits are sitting on a grassy cliffside next to a large stone wall. The ocean is visible in the background. An inset shows a close-up of hands in wetsuits.



This year, our GCSE and A-Level Geography students left the classroom behind and ventured into Northern Ireland's natural landscapes to conduct essential fieldwork for their courses. These trips provided pupils with real-world experience and the chance to apply classroom knowledge to living environments.

CHS 2024/25

Harbour, studying the formation of relict landforms, raised beaches, arches, and other features of coastal erosion. Pupils also visited Portballintrae, where they evaluated coastal management strategies, assessing how well the current defences protect the area from wave erosion. The day offered valuable insights into geomorphological processes and the challenges of sustainable coastal development.

GCSE – River Study with the Ballinderry River Trust
Our GCSE geographers teamed up with the Ballinderry River Trust to conduct a river study along the Lissan Water. Pupils col-

lected data on channel width, depth, velocity, and sediment size at different points along the river's course. They developed fieldwork techniques and used scientific equipment to understand river processes like erosion, transportation, and deposition. This practical investigation supports their Rivers and Fieldwork enquiry units for GCSE exams.

These enriching experiences not only deepened pupils' understanding of geographical concepts but also nurtured teamwork, data analysis, and enquiry skills essential for future academic and professional success.

GEOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHY CLUB

Geography Club: Big Quiz Fun and Games at Break Time!

The Geography Club has been a popular break-time destination for students eager to test their knowledge and have some fun. Pupils from across year groups gathered weekly to play geography-themed games, solve puzzles, and challenge each other on everything from world capitals to natural hazards. A highlight of the term was the Big Geography Quiz, expertly compiled by Year 14 student Adam Creevy. The quiz tested students' map skills, flags, famous landmarks, and current global issues. With prizes on offer and a lively atmosphere, the event was a huge success.

The Geography Club continues to be a fantastic way to learn in a relaxed setting and build friendships through a shared passion for the world around us.



DIG INTO RUBBISH

Year 8 Geography Students Dig into Rubbish at Cookstown Amenity Site

Our Year 8 Geography students took learning out of the classroom and straight into the heart of Cookstown's waste management efforts with an eye-opening visit to the Cookstown Amenity Site. The trip focused on how human activity impacts the local environment—and what we can all do to help.

The tour began with a guided walk through the facility, where pupils saw exactly what happens to the different types of waste that we throw away at home. From glass and cardboard to electrical items and garden waste, the site workers explained how items are sorted, recycled, and safely disposed of. Students were surprised to learn that an average person in Northern Ireland produces over half a tonne of rubbish each year, much of which can be reused or recycled instead of ending up in landfill.



One of the highlights of the visit was seeing the recycling compactors and green waste shredders in action. Pupils watched as waste was transformed into material ready to be reused—turning what many see as "rubbish" into valuable resources. They also learned how landfill sites can pollute rivers and harm wildlife if waste isn't managed properly, linking closely to what they had studied

about river drainage basins and pollution.

During a Q&A session, site staff challenged pupils to think about their own habits. "What's one thing you can do differently this week to reduce your waste?" they asked. Pupils pledged everything from using reusable water bottles to separating plastics at home. Back at school, we discussed the most people don't realise that throwing a plastic bottle in the wrong bin could have such a big impact. It really made us think about how we can help the environment—just by being more careful with our rubbish."

The trip reminded everyone that looking after our planet starts with small actions at home—and sometimes it starts with a visit to the tip!



RIVER STUDIES

Year 9 Dive into River Studies with Speedwell Trust Project

This year, our Year 9 pupils took part in an exciting river study project led by the Speedwell Trust, combining classroom learning with hands-on fieldwork at Parkanaur Forest and the River Torrent.

The project included three interactive classroom sessions, where pupils learned about river systems, the water cycle, and the causes and impacts of pollution on freshwater habitats. The sessions were packed with activities that helped pupils understand how rivers shape the landscape and why protecting them matters.

The highlight of the project was a field trip to the River Torrent at Parkanaur, where pupils became real geographers for the day. Working in small groups, they conducted a scientific river study, testing water quality, measuring the river's speed and depth, and identifying aquatic invertebrates. Using equipment like nets, magnifying glasses, and test



kits, pupils monitored signs of pollution and learned how water health affects the entire ecosystem.

One pupil said:

"It was brilliant getting into the river and checking the water quality ourselves. It made everything we learned in class feel real."

Pupils applied their STEM skills in

a Water Wheels Challenge—designing and building working water wheels to show how river energy can be harnessed. This cross-curricular task helped them connect geography with engineering and environmental science in a creative, practical way.

The project not only boosted pupils' understanding of river environments, but also developed their teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills. It reinforced key topics in the geography curriculum, especially drainage basins, pollution, and sustainability.

A big thank you to the Speedwell Trust for running such an engaging and inspiring programme—and to Parkanaur for providing the perfect outdoor classroom!



CEMCOR FACTORY VISIT

Year 9 Students Go Behind the Scenes at Cemcor Cement Factory

In November, our Year 9 Geography pupils had the exciting opportunity to visit Cemcor Cement Factory, to discover what goes into making one of the most important building materials in the world—cement.

As part of their study of geology, pupils were given a guided tour of the factory floor, where they got to see the cement production process in action. From the quarrying of raw materials to the heated kilns and final grinding, students followed the journey of cement from rock to bag. The scale of the machinery left many amazed—particularly the giant trucks and raw material crushers, some nearly as big as a two-storey house!

Safety was a top priority on the visit. Pupils wore high-vis jackets, helmets, and protective eyewear as they explored different parts of the site. Factory staff explained how they monitor dust levels, reduce emissions, and recycle heat to make the production process more sustainable.

The trip wasn't just about machinery. Students also learned about careers in the cement industry, from engineering and maintenance to logistics, health and safety, and environmental monitoring. Workers shared their own career stories, giving pupils a sense of the range of skills and qualifications needed to work in a modern industrial setting.

A highlight for many was standing on the viewing platform above the massive rotary kiln—a huge, glowing tunnel where raw materials are heated to over 1,400°C. One pupil said: "I didn't realise how technical it was to make cement. There's so much science and engineering involved—it's not just dust and trucks!"

The visit helped pupils see how industry works in the real world—and that Cookstown isn't just home to cement, but to innovation, opportunity, and global-scale production.



HISTORY



Budapest, Hungary Trip, October 2024

Day One

Early departure from CHS at 4.00am for flight from Belfast International to Budapest.

On arrival in Budapest met by our tour guide who talked through some of the local details and etiquette. We were dropped to our accommodation Meininger Hotel Grand Budapest Market Hall- which was modern and comfortable for our short visit.

River sight-seeing cruise on the River Danube to see many of Budapest's most famous attractions. Audio guide via headphones. Beautiful warm, sunny evening weather. Buda and Pest areas

to either side of the river. Buda Castle district and Royal Palace, the Elizabeth Bridge, the Hungarian Parliament, the Chain Bridge, Margaret Island. Complimentary soft drinks.

Day Two

Free time at the local park
House of Terror Museum
Lukacs Thermal Baths

Day Three

Walking tour of the city- Heroes Square, Vajdahunyad Castle, St Stephen's Basilica, Fisherman's Bastion Money Museum





Every Monday at break time, the History Club in Room 30 opens its doors to curious minds and history enthusiasts alike. Run with the enthusiastic support of our sixth form pupils, the club offers a welcoming space to explore the past through hands-on activities, engaging talks, and interactive games.

This year, the club has been buzzing with creativity and learning. Ably led by two of our Upper Sixth pupils Rowan and Sarah, pupils crafted beautiful Armistice poppies in a thoughtful tribute to remembrance. Megan, another of our talented sixth formers, delivered a fascinating talk on Life at Sea, complete with homemade biscuits that gave everyone a literal taste of history!

“

PUPILS CRAFTED BEAUTIFUL AMISTICE POPPIES IN A THOUGHTFUL TRIBUTE TO REMEMBRANCE

”



HISTORY CLUB 2024-25



We also marked significant historical milestones, including a reflective session on the Holocaust at 80 led by Niamh, Rowan and Sarah, and an exciting VE Day code-breaking challenge that had everyone thinking like wartime spies. To top it all off, our quizzes and games brought a fun and competitive edge to our historical explorations.

Whether you're a history buff or just curious to learn more, the History Club is the perfect place to dive into the past and discover stories that shaped our world.

Exploring the Past: Year 11 History Trip to Londonderry



Earlier this term, Year 11 History students embarked on an enriching Shared Education trip to Londonderry alongside our friends from Holy Trinity College. The visit was not only a fantastic opportunity to build friendships across schools, but also a valuable experience that brought the GCSE History studies to life.

Our first stop was the Free Derry Museum, which offered a powerful insight into the civil rights movement and the Troubles. The museum's personal stories, photographs, and multimedia exhibits gave us a perspective on the



struggles faced by communities during this period. It was a thought-provoking experience that encouraged reflection and further discussion.

We then visited the Siege Museum, where we explored the dramatic events of the 1689 Siege of Derry. Through fascinating exhibits and original artefacts, we gained a deeper understanding of the political and religious tensions that shaped this pivotal moment in Irish history. The museum's detailed displays helped us connect classroom learning with real-world history in a vivid and memorable way.



This trip was not only informative and interesting, but also directly supported pupils' GCSE studies by deepening our understanding of key historical events and themes. It was a day of learning, connection, and discovery—one we won't soon forget.

VE Day 80th Anniversary: A Celebration of Courage and Community

This year marks the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, a momentous occasion that signalled the end of World War II in Europe on May 8, 1945.

To commemorate this historic milestone, our school hosted a special educational display in the History Department that brought history to life for students and staff alike.

The exhibition featured an impressive range of authentic wartime ar-

newspaper clippings, photographs and stories highlighting the experiences of local people from Cookstown during the war.

The display was open during break and lunch, and several History classes had the chance to explore it in more detail. While the exhibits and artefacts were explained, pupils were encouraged to ask questions and reflect on the significance of World War II and VE Day.

fantastic to see such a strong turnout from both pupils and staff as we honoured this significant moment in history.



tefacts, including uniforms, helmets, medals, gasmasks, weapons, personal documents, and more. These tangible pieces of history offered a powerful connection to the past. Visitors could also explore

We are immensely thankful for the contributions of Joel Martin, Jason Martin and Ivor Faulkner- their artefacts and historical insights truly brought the past to life for our school community. It was also



HOME ECONOMICS

Year 10 pupils focused on developing their higher level practical skills when making Swiss Rolls: using an electric hand-mixer, folding in and superb rolling. Wouldn't Mary Berry be proud of these swirls?



Year 8 Cooked breakfast

One of Year 8's favourite practical lessons this year was the Cooked Breakfast. They were able to put their hygiene skills into practice to avoid cross-contamination whilst handling and cooking raw meat. They also practised the time management skills of sequencing and dove-tailing to ensure all food was co-ordinated effectively to be served at the same time.



Chocolate cake for Easter

One of the most popular and long-awaited practical lessons was the Chocolate Cake, which pupils decorated with mini eggs for Easter.

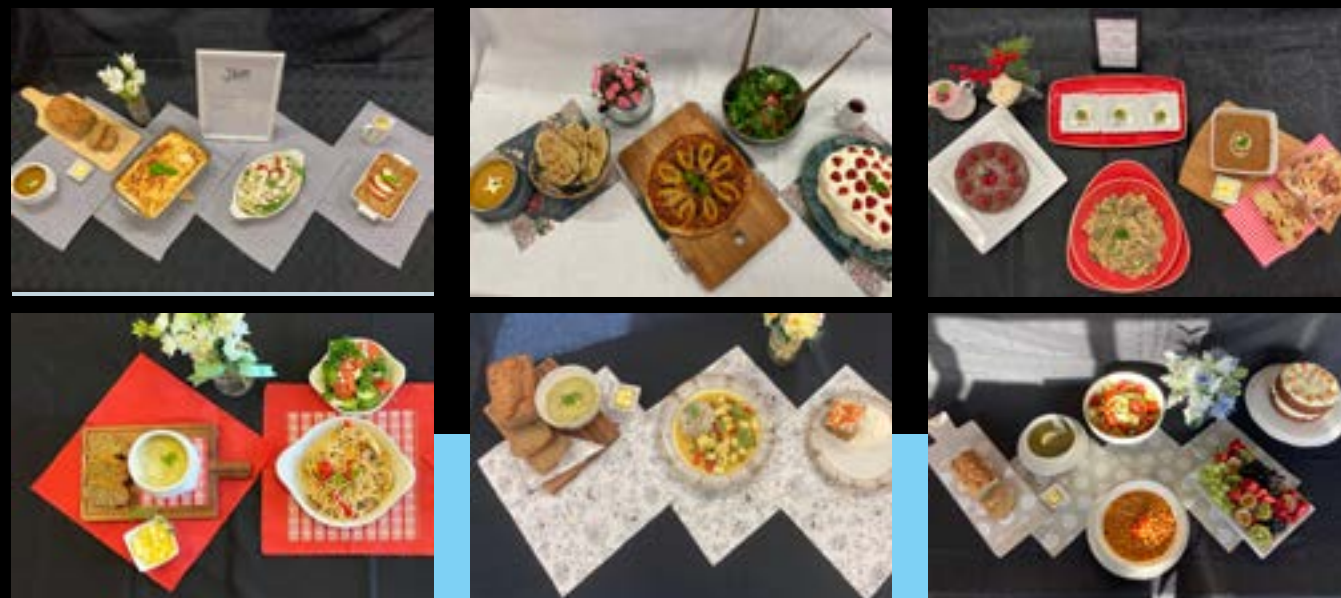


Year 9 Sticks and dips

Year 9 pupils practised their knife skills when making Vegetable Sticks with Dips. The dips were made with yogurt and cream cheese, so they were high in protein and calcium. And the vegetable sticks helped pupils to see a fun way to incorporate more vegetables into their diets, whilst studying the Fruit and Vegetables unit.



LEONOVIS



GCSE PRACTICAL EXAMS

Congratulations to Year 12 GCSE Home Economics: Food & Nutrition students who completed their three hour practical examinations in November. Pupils had to plan, prepare, cook and serve three dishes and three accompaniments suitable for a lacto-ovo vegetarian, whilst also showcasing a range of higher and medium level skills.

The Home Economics Department would also like to thank everyone at home for supporting their children whilst practising and preparing for the examination. Feast your eyes on a small selection of their fantastic results... very well done, Year 12!

ICT

TrailTalk Triumphs at Sentinus Young Innovators 2024

Cookstown High School Pupils Win Recognition for TrailTalk Tourism App

"Innovation, Inspiration, and Impact" – these were the words on lips as the TrailTalk team from Cookstown High School wowed judges and attendees alike at this year's Sentinus Young Innovators 2024, held in Belfast.

TrailTalk, a mobile app designed by a team of Year 10 pupils, earned top recognition in the Digital Innovation category, standing out among

entries from across Northern Ireland as the overall "Best Team Project". The app empowers users to explore local tourism through immersive, GPS-linked stories, images, and reviews – all created by other users. Whether you're hunting for hidden gems in your own town or planning an adventure abroad, TrailTalk is designed to help users discover unique places through community-driven content.



The Traveler's Dilemma

"Travelers today face challenges that can limit the richness of their experiences."

Overloaded with generic, impersonal travel guides. Local insights and hidden gems often go unnoticed. Content creators lack platforms to reach the right audience.



TrailTalk

TrailTalk is a revolutionary mobile app connecting travelers to GPS-based, user-generated tourism content.

Personalised suggestions based on individual interests. Authentic, community-managed content. Combines discovery, collaboration, & meaningful engagement.



Meet the Team Behind TrailTalk

The success of TrailTalk was driven by the creativity, technical skill, and entrepreneurial spirit of five pupils from Year 10:

- Daniel Brownlee
- Luke Johnston
- Karla Kasperaviciute

Each team member brought their own strengths to the project, from coding and content creation to branding, marketing, and user interface design. Together, they collaborated over several weeks to build, refine, and pitch their app to a panel of experts – all while managing schoolwork and extra-curricular commitments.



A Vision Born in the Classroom

What began as a creative idea in a STEM workshop quickly transformed into a fully-formed business concept. The team of pupils, working under the guidance of staff from the ICT department and in partnership with Cookstown Enterprise Centre and

categorise their content (e.g., historic, scenic, foodie, hidden gems). It also includes features like user ratings, accessibility info, and the ability to create themed walking routes. The pupils showed a strong understanding of both technical and commercial elements, including a detailed plan for future development, money-

mented:

"TrailTalk has the potential to impact how local tourism is shared and experienced. The pupils demonstrated confidence, market awareness, and outstanding teamwork – all while remaining rooted in their local community."

The team also impressed with their infographic visualisations, a fully working prototype of the app, and a display board that highlighted user experience, accessibility, and the app's potential to grow globally. They even showcased a revenue model flowchart and a growth projection graph to back up their pitch.

More Than Just a Project

The TrailTalk journey has not only earned the pupils awards – it has also opened doors. Team members have been invited to apply for the Sentinus STEM Youth Board, attend Catalyst innovation sessions in Belfast, and connect with local businesses and developers for potential app sponsorships and mentoring.

Behind the scenes, the project has also been a shining example of collaboration between education and enterprise. With support from the Cookstown Enterprise Centre and the inspiring input from mentors like Mr Eccles, the TrailTalk team has proven that young people, given the right support, can build solutions

with real potential. Looking Ahead

This success is just the beginning. The team would like to refine TrailTalk further, with the opportunity of potentially partnering with local councils and tourism organisations. TrailTalk has shown what's possible when pupils combine creativity, technology, and a passion for problem-solving. As one team member said: "We just wanted to make something useful – something that helps people explore the world around them. Winning at Young Innovators was amazing, but we're even more excited about what might come next."

A Proud Moment for Cookstown High School

Mr Johnston, Head of ICT and STEM Coordinator, expressed pride in the team's efforts: "These pupils showed outstanding commitment and maturity throughout the project. Their success at Sentinus is well deserved, and I believe TrailTalk is a project that could genuinely evolve beyond the classroom. It's proof that our pupils are capable of real innovation."

We look forward to following the TrailTalk's team journey and hopefully celebrating the future successes of this inspirational team.



Nigel Eccles (NY Tech entrepreneur), took part in several entrepreneurship and sessions before pitching their idea at the regional competition.

Their concept was simple but powerful: combine storytelling, maps, and personal recommendations into a platform that travellers and locals alike could use. The app lets users tag locations, add short video or written stories, and

tisation strategies through sponsorship and affiliate links, and ideas for educational tie-ins with schools and tourism boards.

Judges Impressed by Real-World Thinking

The judges praised the team not only for their creativity but for their professional-level pitch, clear understanding of the user journey, and commitment to real-world problem-solving. One judge com-



STEM Outreach Project 2024/2025

Inspiring the Next Generation of Innovators

This academic year, the Cookstown Enterprise STEM Outreach Project continued to go from strength to strength, sparking curiosity and inspiring innovation in classrooms across Mid-Ulster. Now in its latest phase, the project delivered a series of engaging STEM workshops to local primary schools—bringing real-world engineering challenges to life and building the skills of both pupils and mentors alike.

Workshops Across Our Community



Throughout 2024/2025, our STEM Ambassador team—led by Mr Robert Johnston from Cookstown High School—visited a number of local primary schools including:

- Moneymore Primary School
- Churchtown Primary School
- Cookstown Primary School
- Phoenix Integrated Primary School
- Stewartstown Primary School
- Ballytrea Primary School

Each visit brought hands-on excitement, teamwork, and challenges that stretched the minds of budding young engineers from Primary 5 to 7.

What the Project Involved

The workshops were designed to introduce pupils to core STEM principles—especial-

ly structural engineering—through a range of fun, practical tasks. Activities included the Paper Strength Challenge and the Straw Tower Engineering Task, where pupils tested their creativity, resilience, and problem-solving abilities.

Under the guidance of CHS mentors, pupils learned how to design and construct structures, test their strength, and refine their ideas—all while working collaboratively in teams. These real-world tasks brought classroom theory to life and provided an early glimpse into the kind of thinking needed for careers in engineering, design, and technology.

Primary Pupils Rising to the Challenge

The response from the participating schools was outstanding. Pupils displayed strong communication, critical thinking, and design skills, often exceeding expectations with their innovative solutions and attention to detail. From carefully balanced towers to record-breaking weight-bearing structures, their achievements reflected not only creativity, but a real understanding of STEM principles.

Many teachers commented on how their pupils thrived in the team-based, hands-on for-



mat—highlighting how these workshops helped uncover previously unseen talents in design, leadership, and logical reasoning.

Mentors Building Skills for the Future

A huge thanks must go to our Sixth Form STEM Mentors from Cookstown High School, who played a vital role in planning, developing, and delivering each session. Pupils



including Emilie Kelso, Rebecca McAllister, Alex Corbett Wilson, Martins Baufals, Peter Mitchell, Alex Turkington, Justas Juknelis, and Frankie Pallett worked alongside Mr Johnston to research, prototype, and deliver workshop content to schools.

Through this experience, our mentors developed invaluable skills including:

- Workshop planning and resource management
- Public speaking and pre-

sending to groups of all ages - Leadership and teamwork in live teaching environments - Creative problem-solving and adaptability under pressure.

The project not only deepened their understanding of STEM but also gave them practical experience in education and community engagement—skills that will serve them well in any future path.

Thank You to Our Sponsor

None of this would have been possible without the continued support of our project partner and sponsor, Cookstown Enterprise. Their investment in young people—both primary school pupils and sixth formers—has had a lasting impact, empowering over the past years hundreds of students across our region.

Looking Ahead

As we reflect on the successes of this year's programme, we are already excited about what the 2025/2026 project will bring. With new schools, new ideas, and even more ambitious plans on the horizon, we look forward to continuing this mission of inspiring the next generation of entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers, and creators.

LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK LLW



CPR Training

Once again, all Year 9 students, along with our LSC pupils, took part in essential CPR training as part of a joint venture between the LLW and Biology Department. This life-saving skill is a compulsory part of the curriculum—because knowing how to help in an emergency could make all the difference.

Students learned how to assess both conscious and unconscious casualties and respond accordingly, whether breathing or not. They practiced making a 999 call, placing someone in the recovery position, and performing CPR. We also introduced them to using a defibrillator—an invaluable tool if they ever have access to one.

It was fantastic to see everyone fully engaged in the session, and we hope they found it both insightful and empowering. A huge well done to all the pupils who took part, and thank you to Mrs Morrison. Mrs McMurray and Mrs Cheevers for their support in delivering this important module.



Mr Keith Buchanan MLA visited a Year 11 Citizenship class to share details of his job and answer questions. Pupils were delighted that Mr Buchanan accepted their invitation and gave up valuable time in his busy schedule to bring an informative and interesting talk about life as an MLA.



LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE



The Learning Support Centre has enjoyed a remarkable year, marked by numerous pupil achievements across a diverse range of subjects and activities. Several LSC pupils excelled in the Local Credit Union Competition and progressed to compete at the national level. Notable successes include Aimee-Leigh Morgan, who achieved 2nd place in her age category; Michael Weirtheim, who placed 3rd; Jamie Ferguson, who secured 1st place; Jayden Lowry Ferguson and Jasmine Glendinning, who were both runners-up.

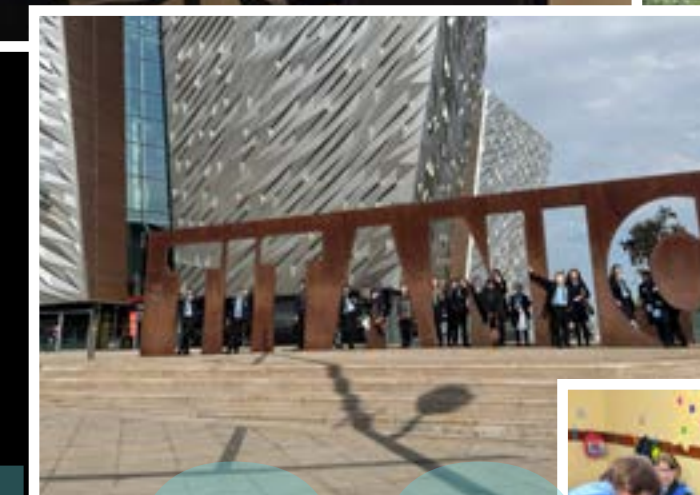
Pupils embraced new challenges in physical education, learning swimming skills at the local Leisure Centre and participating actively in a variety of sports, including badminton. They also competed with great enthusiasm and success in Kurling and Boccia events. One of the year's highlights was the Christmas Coffee Morning for school staff, which was widely celebrated for its success and the strong sense of community.

Students also developed valuable life skills through gardening, cookery, money management, and personal well-being activities—all contributing to their holistic development.

Educational outings enriched pupils' learning experiences, with memorable trips including a visit to the Titanic Museum for History, and excursions to Northern Regional College. Overall, it has been a fulfilling and rewarding year for pupils in the Learning Support Centre. They have embraced new opportunities, overcome challenges, and strived to reach their full potential.

As we reflect on this extraordinary year, we are immensely proud of every pupil in the Learning Support Centre. Their achievements are a testament to their hard work, the support of their families, and the dedication of the staff team. We wish all our current year 12s success in the next step of their educational journey.

Congratulations to all pupils for their hard work and outstanding achievements!



LSC

Maths

Junior Maths Challenge



The Junior Maths Challenge was held on Thursday 1st May and everyone in 9CA and 9CB had a go at the questions. The results this year are extremely encouraging – 16 pupils out of those who were present on the day

have been awarded a Bronze, Silver or GOLD Certificate.

An amazing performance from Jack Hargan in 9CA who achieved a GOLD certificate as well as being the best in the school. To top this all off, Jack also has qualified for the next round of the competition called the Junior Kangaroo – he gets to do another set of 25 multiple choice questions but that is no bother to him.

Silver awards went to Cameron Donnelly, Harriet Graham, Yan-Ching Lam, Boy Lee and to Regan Young. Special mention to Yan-Ching who was only one mark away from achieving the Gold certificate.

Bronze awards were achieved by Reuben Allen, Erin Butler, Aimee Elliott, Alexis Ferguson, Joe Gourley,

Alex McIvor, Kaiya McNickle, Sean Sweetnam, Adam Witkowski and Haomin Zheng. Well done to everyone for taking part, particularly those who were just one or two marks below the threshold for Bronze. One more correct answer would have made all the difference.

Here are examples of some of the Junior Maths Challenge Questions for you to have a try

1. What is $\frac{1}{5}$ of 10% of 20?
A 1 B 2 C 5
D 10 E 20

2. What is the difference between the smallest four-digit multiple of 3 and the largest three-digit multiple of 4?
A 3 B 4 C 5
D 6 E 7

3. The country which, on average, eats the most chocolate per person is Switzerland, with the average person consuming 8.8Kg each year. How many 100g chocolate bars would this be?
A 8.8 B 88
C 880 D 8800
E 88 000



SENIOR CHOIR and RBL

music



This year, the Senior Choir have performed several times at events held at the Royal British Legion in Cookstown. We sang at their special Christmas dinner event in 2023 and were invited back again in December 2024.

It was a special year this year for the RBL as they celebrated their centenary.

They planned a concert on Saturday 26th April, featuring musicians, singers, bands and storytellers from near and far. CHS Senior Choir were small in number that evening as it was both a Saturday and still the Easter Holidays from school. But they sang and played beautifully and those in the audience connected to CHS were very proud of us all.

Ulster Orchestra Visit



March 25th saw and heard the Millar Hall buzzing with excitements as 200+ pupils from Cookstown Primary School, Phoenix Integrated Primary School and Gaelscoil Eoghain were treated to a workshop with visiting musicians from the Ulster Orchestra.

The morning was spent learning about how music is used in animated movies to add to the atmosphere and support the on-screen action. In the afternoon, our Year 8 pupils spent time with retired UO violinist Nigel Ireland and the Brass Quartet from the Orchestra who helped them explore the links between what we see and what we hear in movies and what happens when these two things

aren't what we expect.

Some of our Year 8 pupils volunteered to play percussion instruments along with the brass musicians and we discovered that playing the music of Baby Shark with the screen action from Jaws makes it a lot less scary (and it seems hilarious!). This was a fantastic opportunity for pupils to meet with professional musicians and to hear quality live performance of favourite tunes as well as new music.

Thank you to Nigel and the Quartet – we look forward to the next visit!

Successful Year for Kaitlin

Caitlin in Year 12 is pictured here with her awards from another successful year at Dunganannon Music Festival. During the festival, Caitlin competed in nine different classes, winning seven of these and achieving a second and a fourth place in the others.

Additionally, Caitlin was again awarded the Perpetual Cup for Most Promising Young Singer, a cup she won last year too. The adjudicator, Gillian McCutcheon, described Caitlin as having 'a beautiful tone,

vocal diversity and the ability to switch her voice to different styles'.

All of us in the Music Department at CHS are very proud of Caitlin's achievements. It was wonderful to hear her sing one of her successful songs at the Spring Concert too.



Spring Concert

On Thursday 10th April, the Music Department hosted the annual Spring Concert to a packed Millar Hall. Over two hours of live music and dancing delighted the audience, who enjoyed a packed and varied programme.

Thom and Lois Cunningham. This got the evening off to an exciting start. Niamh Greenstreet chose the song 'Ordinary' for her solo song, and this a suitable contrast to the opener. It was followed by first time soloist Sophie Brodison

but it was worth the wait. A small ensemble directed by our guitar and drums tutor, Stephen Maginnis, performed 'I was made for lovin' you'. They are Jake Nelson, Lucy Cherry, Lily Parks and Casey Burns. This was the first time for Jake, Lucy and Lily and they were great. By now, the audience were well warmed up and quite impressed by what they were hearing. Also, this year pianists were seen on the big screen, so their talents were visible by all. This was even more impressive when Lily Cahoon took to the piano. She performed music from 'Pirates of the Caribbean', covering practically every note on the keyboard and astounding the whole room with her speed and fluency. It was one of those 'you had to be there' moments.

this has given an opportunity for younger violinists to learn to play together and have fun doing it! The String Group is led by Mrs Gormley, but she often says it is really Annabelle who is in charge! They performed two pieces



The evening opened with a rendition of 'Great Balls of Fire' by Casey Burns, Leah

who performed a piano solo called 'Valse Viennoise'. She may have waited until Year 14 to do her Spring Concert solo,

String Group rehearses in school on Thursday mornings before school. We have been sad to see some older string musicians leave us over the past two years, but

of music: the theme from the film 'Romeo and Juliet' and 'My Favourite Things' from 'The Sound of Music'.



They say it is the quiet ones you have to watch out for. Anna Millar had too often left the music to her older sister, Emily. But this year Anna auditioned for the school production of *Oliver!* and revealed an incredible singing voice. As Mrs Sowerberry she got to sing a hilarious song with her on-stage husband, played by Mr Graham. Knowing that she

Ukrainian Bell Carol at Christmas with Sofia Bilous singing the beginning in Ukrainian. They had ambition and skill and Mrs Gormley wanted them to perform something awesome at the concert. They learned 'Adiemus' by Karl Jenkins, a complex song that uses a made-up language throughout. The choir has over 45 members and they created an impressive sound, singing



could hold a tune meant that she could certainly do something at the Spring Concert. She brought Emily along as accompanist on the piano and they performed a stunning version of the song 'Skyfall'. An absolute showstopper.

Mrs Gormley has been working with younger singers in school this year in a choir simply called the Years 8-12 Choir. They had sung the

very quietly and then building to an astounding climax. They were accompanied by Lois Cunningham on flute, Theo Thompson on congas and Emily Millar on piano. This year's concert had more pupils offering to perform than ever before and it is great to see the urge to share music with an audience. This meant that we could cover more styles of music than ever before too. Kaitlyn Hood sang

'Suddenly Seymour' a musical theatre song. This was followed by Hannah Johnston on piano who played a quirky piece from the film 'The Corpse Bride'. Annabelle Davidson took us back in time to the Baroque period with 'Allegro' by Vivaldi and Rachel McQueen performed 'Scottish Dances' a modern interpretation of Scottish themes with unusual rhythms. All four



girls handled the demands of the music and their nerves admirably.

Last year, some parents got a bit of a shock when they saw their daughters in a rock band. These girls were gentle girls who played bagpipes or the flute and certainly did not play electric guitars or drums. However, Beatroot had been born and this year the band has continued to develop its

repertoire and they sound great. With lead singer Kaitlyn Hood, they performed the rock classic 'Hold the Line', and despite a technical issue from the back of the hall, they were magnificent!

After the interval the Spring Concert shows its Ulster-Scots connections with Highland Dancers from Solus who are pupils at CHS. Particularly no-



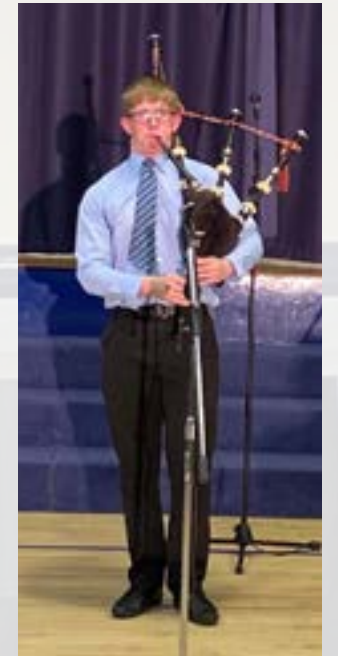
Martin and Emily Glasgow performed a duet version of 'Ashokan Farewell' which is always a crowd pleaser. A Year 10 Group directed by Stephen Maginnis combined the talents of Rachel Charles (guitar), Emily Glasgow (violin), Ellen May Bell (piano) and Kyle Lennox (drums) as they performed Ed Sheeran's song 'Perfect'.

Erika Gourley has performed at several Spring Concerts and the development in her piano

playing is great to see. Since her first nervous performance in Junior School, she has become much more assured and aware of what piece to play to entertain or move the audience. This year she chose a piece called 'Lento' which is a musical term meaning slow. The beautiful harmonies and soft dynamics were evocative and a change of energy in the concert.

This was followed by another change of direction by Sarah

Fulton. Sarah has had lead roles in the last two school productions when she played Mother Superior in 'The Sound of Music' and Nancy in 'Oliver!'. The emotional songs she sang in these roles assured me that she could deliver something special at the concert. She chose a version of the hymn 'How great Thou art', accompanied by Mrs Gormley on piano. As the song moved through different harmonies, dynamics and climaxes, the words truly brought a new at-



mosphere to the Millar Hall. However, Ben Sweetnam quickly changed all that! After some technical issues, he settled into his performance of the heavy rock classic 'Welcome to the Jungle'...and he didn't mean the venue in Moneymore! Ben has been playing guitar in school for a few years now and the variety in his playing makes his performances so interesting. The Spring Concert is a great time to rehearse music that will be played for GCSE or A





level practicals. The next performance was one of these pieces. Pippa Coulter and Leah Allen sang a duet version of the new hymn by the Gettys called 'Christus Victor'. It was accompanied by Erika Gourley on piano, Mrs Gorm-

leah on violin and Mr Gormley on guitar.

moments in the song too. No bother to Caitlin!

This year, Senior Choir has been trying new things: singing in a different language and singing a cappella (un-accompanied). This increases

girls. It would be fair to say that the moment after 'Stumble' there was a realisation that we did it!! We had done a fantastic job on a really difficult song and it went really well. Even better, the audience loved it too!

The Spring Concert would not be complete without a rousing finale. This year the outgoing Year 14 pupils took charge. They wanted ABBA and Mamma Mia was the song! As the

and off we went. Possibly the best finale ever...a lot of fun at the end of a great concert and an audience singing and clapping along. I was surprised the roof of the Millar Hall was still intact.



However, this was not to be the end as the pupils had worked on another musical item, unknown to Mrs Gormley. The singers and musicians had rehearsed 'Thank-you for the Music', another ABBA song. After thank-yous to helpers and a beautiful tribute to Mrs Gormley from the Year 14s, everyone in the hall was invited to stand and sing together. It was a wonderful night, a night when many memories were made, when nerves were overcome, and music and dance delighted everyone. Mrs Gormley wants to thank all who helped make it such a success, the staff who helped, the pupils who rehearsed and participated, the audience

initials of the Year 14 s made SSSA, this is what they were known as...not quite ABBA! Costume items were sourced, inflatable guitars included



who came along and those who provided refreshments at the interval. What a great night it was!!!!

the pressure...not only are the girls singing in three parts, or even four at times, but they had to remember words in Zulu and with no piano for support. The choir had been working on two songs 'He lives in you' from The Lion King' which uses Zulu, and the a cappella song 'Not gonna stumble'. Both of these songs were full of risks and every eye had to be glued to Mrs Gormley as she conducted the

who came along and those who provided refreshments at the interval. What a great night it was!!!!

RELIGIOUS STUDIES



Our year in R.E. began on a high, when on results day in August we learned that two of our pupils, Annabell Davidson and Emma Cahoon, had achieved full marks in their module examination. We were delighted for both girls and this great achievement is testament to their hard work. The overall GCSE results were fantastic, with 91% of the students achieving A* to B grades and 73% achieving either an A or A* grade.

It has been a busy year in the Religious Education Department, with our pupils having the opportunity to study a wide range of topics, including Christian Ethics, Church History, Matthew's Gospel, Judaism and Islam, in addition to character studies into inspirational Christians likes Dr Bill Woods 'The Angel of the Amazon' and William Wilberforce MP.

Through R.E. the pupils have lots of opportunity to express their opinion, whether through class discussion or walking debates. Oracy is a key part of life, and we encourage students to become confident orators in discussions about topical issues. Some of the key topics debated in Key Stage 3 this year include, must Christians always forgive; should smokers receive free health care treatment; was Dietrich Bonhoeffer's involvement in the

plot to kill Hitler a justifiable action? At GCSE level the debate focuses on ethical issues like abortion, assisted dying, war and capital punishment.

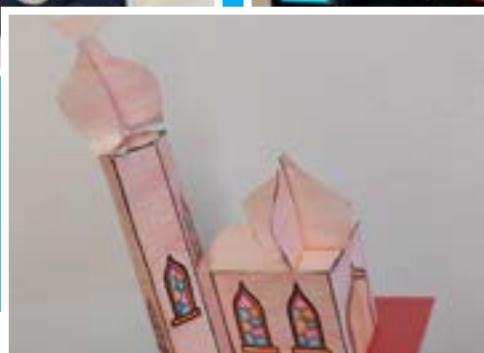
We have strong links with external agencies and this year 'Made for More' visited the department and carried out some great workshops with our Year 8 and 10 pupils. Year 8s were encouraged to think about building a positive self-esteem and Year10s were challenged to make good choices in relation to vaping. The pupils were encouraged to think about these important issues, whilst also having fun.

Logos Ministries International also visited the R.E. Department. LMI is a Christian mission organisation, and their work covers a wide range of initiatives, which are impacting lives in many countries around the world. Their motto is: We want the world to know Jesus. Logos Ministries International worked with our Year 10 and 12 Religious Studies pupils telling them about persecution of Christians around the world.

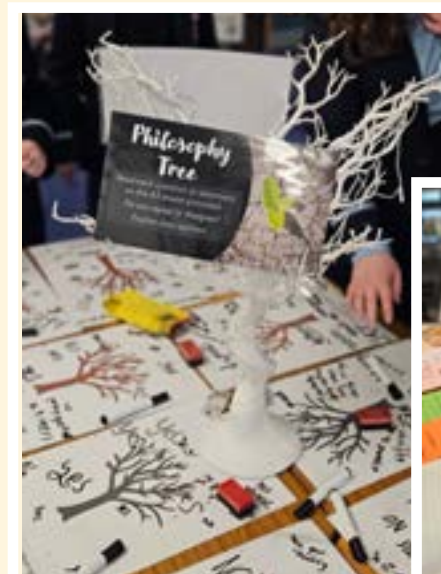
As this school year draws to a close, we take this opportunity to wish our GCSE and A Level students every success in the next stage of their educational journey.

MOSQUE BUILDING

In Year 10 R.E. our pupils learn about Islam. They study the mosque and learn about the important features that help Muslims to express their faith. Year 10 had great fun building their own 3D mosques.



OPEN DAY



MADE FOR MORE SEMINARS



LOGOS MONISTRIES



Students are given numerous opportunities to enhance their oral and written literacy skills. In Year 10, they take on the role of a journalist reporting live from the day of Pentecost. Their task is to create a front-page news article capturing the dramatic events as they unfold.

CREATIVE WRITING



Year 10 Pentecost Articles

Spanish

Celebrating Languages Through Outreach



A European Day of Languages Experience at Cookstown Primary School

On Thursday, 26th September 2024, a group of enthusiastic Year 12 pupils from our school embarked on a unique outreach experience at Cookstown Primary School to celebrate the European Day of Languages. This initiative, coordinated by Dr A. Ranchoux, Head of Modern Languages, offered our students a chance to step into the role of language educators for the morning.

Thanks to the warm cooperation of Mr Paul Mitchell, Acting Principal of Cookstown Primary School, and the support of Primary 6 teachers—Mr Beggs, Miss Armstrong, and Mrs Irwin—our pupils were welcomed into three classrooms to deliver engaging Spanish language workshops. The sessions ran from 9:30am to 11:30am, with each Year 12 pair leading short, interactive lessons designed to spark curiosity and enjoyment in learning a new language.

The outreach event not only celebrated linguistic diversity but also provided our students with a valuable glimpse into the world of teaching and language practice. Working in pairs, they used specially prepared resources to guide Primary 6 pupils through fun and topical Spanish activities, fostering both learning and cultural appreciation. The experience left a lasting impression on our Year 12 pupils who lead the teaching workshops:

"The kids were fantastic! They picked up the vocabulary so quickly. It is thanks to you I realised I wanted to become a teacher. I have always had a love for the language. I remember I was still in Primary when I met you and you visited with a girl called Amy

who did A Level. It is thanks to this that I know for certain I want to pursue a career in teaching or at least a career involving languages" — Emiliya I.

"I was nervous at first, but once we got started, it was actually really fun. It gave me a new understanding for how much work goes into teaching" — Tyler G.

"It was a great way to celebrate the European Day of Languages. It was great to see the pupils getting excited about learning Spanish. " — Luke McG. This experience is recognized by our school and the Department of Education as a meaningful extension of classroom learning. It highlights the importance of community collaboration and the role of language education in building bridges across generations and cultures.

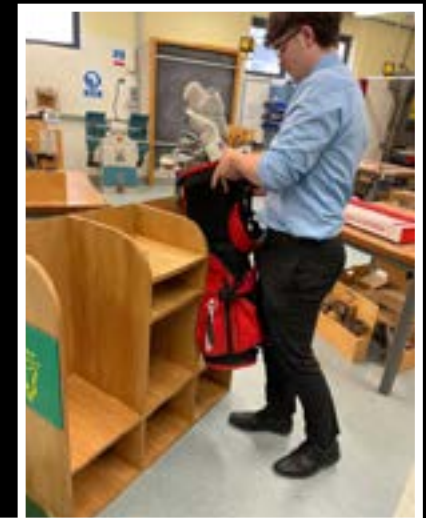
We extend our sincere thanks to Cookstown Primary School for their hospitality and to all the pupils and staff who made this event a success. It was a day of shared learning, laughter, and linguistic celebration—an inspiring reminder of the power of languages to connect us all. Finally, let us end this account by sharing a timeless expression in Spanish.

"El aprender no ocupa lugar y por supuesto, a nadie pertenece el conocimiento de modo que compartir no es sino cuidar a todos." In a nutshell, "Knowledge is a shared human heritage".

Hasta la próxima
Dr Ranchoux

technology projects

A2 level



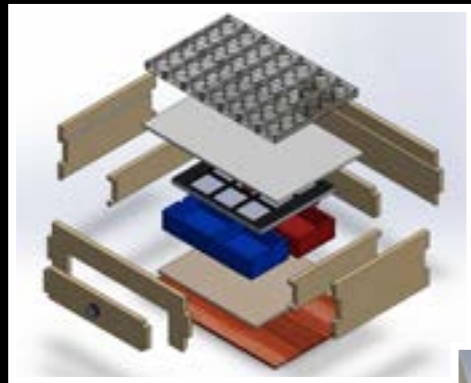
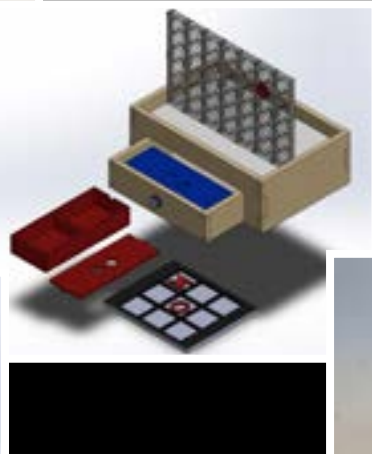
technology projects

AS level



technology projects

GCSE



ECO TEAM



Angus Youth Challenge 2024-25

Cookstown High School has once again proven its agricultural prowess, with not one, but two teams reaching the semi-finals of the prestigious ABP Angus Youth Challenge 2024-25. This remarkable achievement for both of the teams, comprised of Joel Hamilton, Sam Forrest, Daniel Blair and Ryan McConnell, as well as Andrew McKeown, Max Millar and Rowan Brodison. It also highlights the school's continued commitment to excellence in agri-food education and youth development.

The Challenge, hosted at Logan Hall, Balmoral Park, brought together 28 teams from across Northern Ireland, all vying for a coveted place in the final and the prize

CHS's strong showing in the semi-finals is a testament to the talent and dedication of its students.

Congratulations to both CHS teams for their outstanding efforts and for representing the school with pride and professionalism!



of 5 Aberdeen Angus calves. The event is a unique opportunity for Year 11 pupils to gain hands-on experience in sustainable beef farming, business planning, and public speaking.

Each CHS team impressed judges with their innovative ideas, teamwork, and passion for agriculture. Their projects focused on key industry themes of animal welfare, and the future of food production. The semi-finalists were selected based on their performance in a video presentation by a panel of agri-food experts.



COLOUR RUN

A SPLASH OF COLOUR FOR A CAUSE

Over 120 of our pupils—and a fair few game members of staff—laced up their trainers and took to the North Pole pitch for this year's much-anticipated Colour Run on Wed 11th June. With the sun shining down and spirits high, the only thing more colourful than the paint in the air was the enthusiasm on every face.

As pupils made their way around the pitch, they were met with an unexpected (but gleefully received) barrage of powder paint at every turn. It's not every day that staff are encouraged to throw things at pupils—and with such gusto! Laughter rang out, clouds of colour danced in the breeze, and by the final lap, everyone looked like walking rainbows.

After all that energy, what better way to finish than a well-deserved stop at the ice cream van? Sprinkles and

smiles all round.

But the most meaningful part of the day? The incredible fundraising effort. Together, we raised money for our school funds and this year's chosen charity, Mid Ulster First Responders—a vital local organisation run entirely by volunteers who provide urgent medical care within our community.

A huge well done to all our pupils for taking part with such energy and enthusiasm. Special recognition goes to our top fundraisers this year: Isabella Shearer, Jack Doyle, Rosie Burns, and Phoebe Davidson.

A colourful day for an incredible cause—what more could you ask for?

KS3 Celebration of Achievement



Key Stage 3 Celebration of Achievement 2024-25
On Tuesday 24th June 2025, we honoured those pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 who had made most progress, achieved 50 or more achievement points, and a host of other awards.

The KS3 Celebration of Achievement differs from our Annual Prize Day as it awards pupils for doing their best across a range of categories and focuses on progress rather than excellence.



This year, more Year 8 pupils than ever before were awarded certificates for progress and achievement points, and there were more pupils across Key Stage 3 who achieved 100% attendance through the school year. Form Tutors nominated a girl and a boy from each Form Class who embody the school ethos: each individual has a duty to

build a community, to strive to do their best, to show compassion for those in need and to take responsibility for their own words and actions; these pupils received the Virtus Cum Scientia awards.

In Year 9, pupils who had achieved Gold, Silver or Bronze awards in the Junior Mathematical Challenge received their certificates. One Year 9 boy, Jack Hargan, was highlighted as he has progressed through to the Kangaroo level of this challenge. Additionally in Year 9, the Tom Gibson Memorial History Cup was awarded to Luke Pitts as Most Enthusiastic Historian. Pupils in Year 10 received end of KS3 certificates in recognition of the end of a period of learning and a transition into KS4. The Bible Society had visited school recently and provided prizes for one member of each Year 10 class, awarding their achievements during the

visit in June.



Each year group also received recognition in the following categories: School Council Representation, Charitable Endeavour, awards for Lan-

guages, Music, Art, Science, Sporting Endeavour and Sporting Achievement.

Entertainment during each ceremony was provided by junior pupils: Lily Cahoon stunned the Year 8 pupils with a performance of 'Pirates of the Caribbean' on piano. She had performed this at the 2025 Spring Concert, and it was so good to hear it again. Lucy Cherry performed in front of her own year group, showing no nerves as she performed a contemporary dance

routine; it was mesmerising. A group of Year 10 girls, Emily Glasgow (violin), Rachel Charles (guitar), Ellen May Bell (saxophone) and Eva Cur-



ry (piano) gave their version of Viva la Vida by Coldplay. It was brilliant! They also performed in front of their peers and that takes a lot of bravery.

Reverend Michael Curry presented the various awards and gave a short address at the end of each ceremony. Each Head of Year proudly addressed the year group they oversee, and Mrs Allen and Mrs Gormley started and ended proceedings.

These events in school are an important part of celebrating the learning journey each pupil has been on this year, recognising that each one is different and valuable, able to succeed in a range of different ways. The KS3 Celebration of Achievement also commends pupils who have developed their character and those who have made an impact on our school community. Hopefully next year, even more pupils will be celebrated for their achievements during 2025-26.





MARATHON RELAY

On Sunday 4th May 2025, students and staff from our school proudly took part in the Moy Park Belfast City Marathon Relay, transforming months of training, teamwork, and anticipation into a day of achievement, celebration, and community spirit — all for a cause that hits close to home.

With teams made up of sixth form students, teachers, and support staff, the build-up to the event was filled with energy and enthusiasm. From sharing training progress to figuring out the logistics of race day, the excitement was contagious. Every Tuesday after school, runners gathered to train together on the King Charles Trail, turning a simple path into a place of connection, encouragement, and preparation.

But this was more than just a fitness challenge. We ran with purpose, fundraising for the Northern Ireland Air Ambulance, a charity deeply valued by the Cookstown community. With an initial goal of £2,000, our school rallied behind the cause and proudly raised over £3,000 — a testament to the generosity, passion, and heart of our community.

The day itself was unforgettable. With some runners taking part in an event like this for the first time, nerves were high — but so was the team spirit. The city streets came alive with the buzz of thousands of runners, but our school family stood out with their matching tops, kindly sponsored by

local business J&K Coaches, and their unmistakable determination.

One of the most powerful aspects of the day was how it reflected the strong relationships within our school community. Sixth form students didn't just run alongside each other — they ran alongside the dedicated and passionate teachers and support staff who invest in them every day. This shared experience brought everyone even closer, reinforcing a sense of respect, trust, and encouragement that goes far beyond the classroom.

As many as possible gathered at the finish line to celebrate — laughing, cheering, and reflecting on what they'd just achieved. Some even extended the celebration with a well-deserved meal together, swapping stories from the route and already looking forward to what's next. More than just a race or a medal, this experience sparked something lasting: a greater appreciation for wellbeing, the power of community, challenging ourselves and the difference we can make when we come together. It's safe to say this won't be the last time our school takes on a challenge like this — because when we run together, we go further.

Thank you to everyone who supported financially or through words of encouragement, none of it went unnoticed.
Mr L Stewart

PUPIL ACHIEVEMENTS

Luke Hamilton Year 9

British Schools Shooting Championships – Birmingham

From Monday 3rd to Wednesday 5th February, Luke proudly represented the school at the British Schools Shooting Championships held in Birmingham, competing against participants from

England, Scotland, and Wales.

On Tuesday, Luke took part in the air pistol event and achieved 35th place out of 60 competitors. The following day, he competed in the air rifle discipline and secured an impressive 9th place—just two points short of qualifying for the final.

Remarkably, Luke faced the added challenge of having to use a loaned rifle due

to a communication issue, which prevented him from using his own equipment. Despite limited time to adjust and calibrate the sights, he performed exceptionally well under pressure.

Luke thoroughly enjoyed the experience and is already looking forward to competing again next year.



PUPIL ACHIEVEMENTS

Rebecca Bell

Royal British Legion National Youth Standard Bearer

Congratulations to Year 13 student Rebecca Bell, who has once again been awarded the prestigious title of Royal British Legion National Youth Standard Bearer—for the second consecutive year. Rebecca retained her title on 6 April 2025, after achieving first place at the national final in Stockport, confirming her position as the leading Youth Standard Bearer in the United Kingdom.

Rebecca's journey to national recognition is a testament to her dedication, discipline, and unwavering respect for remembrance. Over the past year, she has represented Cookstown and Northern Ireland at numerous high-profile events and competitions, regularly carrying the Northern Ireland Youth Standard with pride and distinction.



Her remarkable year began in September 2024 with a memorial service for Sir Clive Johnstone at St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey. Later that month, she claimed first place in the Youth category at the Group 7 Standard Bearers Competition in Loughbrickland, Banbridge, and proudly carried the NI Youth Standard at the War Memorial Rededication in Moy.

October brought further success: Rebecca was crowned Youth Champion for both Northern Ireland and Ireland at the NI & ROI Standard Bearer Competition in Cookstown. She went on to represent Northern Ireland at the Poppy Appeal Launch in Belfast, the RBL Strabane Centenary Drumhead Service, and the Festival of Remembrance at Belfast's Waterfront Hall, all while continuing to support local remembrance events, including the Field of Remembrance at Belfast City Hall and the Tesco Poppy Appeal Collection in Cookstown.

In November, she travelled to London for the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall, taking part in two nationally broadcast performances. On Remembrance Sunday, she proudly paraded with her father and grandfather to the Cenotaph at Whitehall, honouring three generations of dedication to service and remembrance.

In the new year, Rebecca received her official trophy for her NI Youth win and was formally presented

with the NI Youth Standard at the NI Conference in Ballymena. In March, she carried the Standard in the Portadown St Patrick's Day Parade, and in April, she achieved her most significant accolade: winning the RBL National Youth Standard Bearer Competition in Stockport.

Since her national victory, Rebecca has continued to represent the Royal British Legion with distinction. She carried the Standard at the RBL Cookstown Centenary Festival of Remembrance, attended the RBL National Conference in Harrogate (17 May), participated in the NI Armed Forces Day in Newtownards (21 June), and supported the Randalstown Branch 100th Anniversary Parade and Drumhead Service (22 June).

Rebecca's success is not only a personal achievement but also a reflection of her strong character and commitment to honouring those who have served. She is an outstanding role model and ambassador for her school and community. We are incredibly proud of Rebecca and wish her every success as she continues her duties as the National Youth Standard Bearer in the year ahead.



OLIVER!



Few musicals have captured the grit and heart of Victorian London with such falir and pathos as *Oliver!* and few school productions have tackled it with such energy, commitment, and flair as this year's remarkable performance.

Oliver! is, of course, based on Charles Dickens' 1837–39 novel *Oliver Twist*, and retains much of the book's biting social commentary – poverty, injustice, and the perils of the workhouse – while transforming it into something vivid, tuneful, and deeply human. Lionel Bart's 1960 stage adaptation remains a landmark in British musical theatre, being one of the first to bring the grimy underworld of London's East End to life through song and dance. While Dickens

gave us the characters, Bart gave them unforgettable voices. As in the novel, the story follows young Oliver, an orphan born into hardship, who dares to ask for "more" and sets off on a journey through a world of exploitative adults, ragtag thieves, and a few surprising allies. From the sinister charm of Fagin to the brutal menace of Bill Sikes, and the tragic nobility of Nancy, the characters remain as compelling today as they were nearly two centuries ago.

Our 2024 production honoured this rich legacy while bringing a fresh, youthful energy to the piece. The students navigated the show's demanding emotional range with impressive maturity – from

the cheeky camaraderie of "Consider Yourself" to the heartbreaking tenderness of "As Long As He Needs Me." The ensemble shone throughout, giving voice to the voiceless street urchins and underclass that Dickens championed.

Of course, the original Oliver! story is fiction, and does not claim to be based on real events. However, Dickens' novel drew heavily on the real conditions of London's poor in the 19th century – child labour, crime, and the rigid social structures that made escape from poverty nearly impossible.

In Dickens' time, the orphan Oliver Twist's survival and defiance offered readers hope. In our time, this production has done much the same – reminding us that kindness, courage, and compassion remain our best defences against cruelty and indifference.

As Lionel Bart once said: "A musical should rise above the spoken word." This year, our students



made it soar.

Oliver! Review
Cookstown High School's 2024 Production of Oliver! – A Theatrical Triumph
In October 2024, Cookstown High School once again lit up the stage with a bold, brilliant production of Lionel Bart's Oliver!. Following on from the success of The Sound of Music in 2023, this year's musical confirmed that Cookstown's tradition of large-scale school shows is very much alive—and thriving.

Over 70 pupils took part in the production, either on stage, behind the scenes, or in the orchestra, bringing Charles Dickens' beloved tale of poverty, perseverance, and found family to life in the Millar Hall. For three consecutive nights, audiences were transported to the grimy backstreets of Victorian London.

At the heart of the story was Luke Johnston, whose portrayal of the orphaned Oliver Twist was filled with quiet strength and heart. Louis Donnelly was mesmerising as the crafty Fagin, bringing a perfect balance of menace, humour, and warmth to the role. The audience was equally charmed

by Rory Harkness as the cheeky and ever-confident Artful Dodger, who led the ensemble with swagger and skill



in "Consider Yourself". Sarah Fulton's rendition of "As Long As He Needs Me" was a standout moment—delivered with vocal strength and genuine emotion. Andrew Lennox as Mr. Bumble and Chloe Kirkpatrick as Mrs. Corney delivered some of the biggest laughs of the night with their exaggerated antics and comedic timing.

The young ensemble—whether workhouse children, pickpockets, or townspeople—filled the stage with

movement and voice, from the bustling "Food, Glorious Food" to the haunting "Who Will Buy?". Their dedication and teamwork were evident in every number.

Months of rehearsals led by dedicated staff went into this production, with students giving up countless breaktimes and after-school hours to polish songs, refine scenes, and perfect choreography. Sets, costumes, lighting, and music all came together to create a vivid and immersive experience for both cast and audience.

Amie Graham, a Year 10 pupil, reflected: "Oliver! was a wonderful experience and was so fun to work on and be a part of."

Louis Donnelly, who played Fagin, reflected: "It was hard work, but so worth it. Seeing the audience react every night made it unforgettable."

As the curtain fell each evening, the Millar Hall was filled with rapturous applause—proof of the production's success and the students' exceptional talent. For many, Oliver! was their first taste of performance; for others, a welcome return to the stage. For all, it was an experience they'll never forget.



Cookstown High School

continues to nurture young talent and celebrate the arts through vibrant productions like Oliver!—reminding us all that, even in the darkest moments, there's always room for song, story, and hope.





ESPOONLAHTI UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL VISIT

BUILDING INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS



In May this year, Cookstown High School was delighted to welcome visitors from Espoonlahti Upper Secondary School, Finland, for the third consecutive year. The continuing partnership between our two schools has become an important part of the CHS calendar, offering valuable opportunities for cultural exchange, collaboration, and friendship.

A Growing Partnership

The relationship with Espoonlahti Upper Secondary School reflects Cookstown High School's commitment to broadening horizons and preparing pupils to engage with an increasingly global society. Over the past three years, the exchange has provided staff and pupils from both schools with the chance to share ideas, explore different approach-

es to learning, and celebrate the strengths of two very different educational systems.

A Memorable Programme

During their stay, our Finnish visitors were warmly welcomed into school life. They joined lessons across a range of subjects, met with pupils and staff, and shared reflections about life and education in Finland. Beyond the classroom, the group experienced some of the cultural and historical highlights of Mid-Ulster.

One of the most memorable moments of the visit was a trip to Killymoon Castle, where the group was treated to a guided tour by Norman Bell. The visitors were fascinated by the history of the castle, and their experience was

made even more special by Dorothy Coulter's warm hospitality, which left a lasting impression on everyone.

The programme also included a day trip to the Giant's Causeway and the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge. Blessed with beautiful weather, the pupils enjoyed exploring Northern Ireland's stunning coastline together — creating memories that will last long after the exchange.

Another highlight was a visit to the Mid Ulster Council offices, where pupils were welcomed by Councillor Wesley Brown. The group thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the workings of local government and the important role it plays in serving the community.

For CHS pupils, the programme was a unique opportunity to act as hosts and ambassadors, building confidence while learning about another culture. Conversations between pupils from both schools highlighted many shared interests, from music and sport to future study and career ambitions.

Looking Ahead

The ongoing success of the partnership is a source of pride for Cookstown High School. Each year, it has grown stronger, providing lasting connections that extend well beyond the classroom. Plans are already being discussed to continue and expand the programme in future years, ensuring that even more pupils benefit from the experience of international exchange.

This special relationship with Espoonlahti Upper Secondary School enriches the educational experience of our pupils and reflects our wider ethos: to prepare young people not only for academic success, but also for life as confident, responsible, and outward-looking members of society.





on the slopes became a favourite tradition, with pupils enjoying the mountain views and hot meals before afternoon lessons.



Day 8 – Homeward Bound via Verona Before heading to the airport, we stopped for a few hours in Verona, where pupils explored Juliet's Balcony, Piazza Bra, the Roman Arena, and local cafés. It was the perfect cultural ending to a week full of sport, growth, and laughter.



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Reflections

This trip wasn't just about skiing. Pupils discovered new strengths, stepped out of comfort zones, supported each other, and embraced a different culture. It was about learning, laughing, and creating memories that will last a lifetime.



To anyone considering a future ski trip – go for it! Whether you're a complete beginner or love a challenge, the slopes of Pinzolo are waiting for you.

Thank you to our staff team – Mrs Hall, Mr Wilson, Dr Ranchoux, Mrs McCabe, and Mr Johnston – for making this trip possible.

See you on the slopes in 2027!



Day 4 – Rest Day and Local Discovery

Heavy rain at resort level meant the slopes were closed, but pupils made the most of a rest day. Exploring Pinzolo's charming streets, gift shops, and cafés (with plenty of gelato!) proved to be a relaxing highlight. A table quiz in the afternoon brought out the competitive spirit and plenty of laughs. A well-timed weather drop overnight promised better conditions for Day 5.



Day 5 – Back on the Slopes
Sunshine returned, and so did our pupils to the slopes! There was a real buzz as everyone embraced the good conditions and incredible views from the summit. Spirits were high, and confidence was growing across all groups.

Day 6 – Pushing Limits and Celebrating Progress

By now, tired legs were setting in, but progress didn't stop. Intermediates tackled their first black run, and many beginners reached the summit and conquered both red and blue runs. In the evening, we enjoyed authentic Italian pizza and reflected on how far everyone had come in just a few days.

Day 7 – A Week of Achievement Comes to an End

On our final ski day, every pupil had something to celebrate. Our ski instructors presented awards to each group, and we hosted our own Cookstown Ski Awards that evening, recognising perseverance, team spirit, and the odd memorable fall! Bags were packed, and the group took a final stroll through Pinzolo, proud of all they had achieved.



SKI TRIP 2025

"FROM FIRST TURNS TO SUMMIT RUNS – A WEEK TO REMEMBER!"



In January 2025, 49 pupils and 5 staff from Cookstown High School set off on a once-in-a-lifetime adventure to the stunning ski resort of Pinzolo, located in the heart of the Italian Dolomites. The eight-day trip was packed with new experiences, personal achievement, and plenty of fun – both on and off the slopes. For many, it was a journey of firsts: their first time skiing, first flight, and first taste of authentic Italian pizza!

Day-by-Day Highlights

Day 1 – Touchdown in Italy

After an early morning departure from school and a smooth flight into Verona, excitement built as we travelled through the Italian countryside toward the mountains. As snow-capped peaks came into view, pupils got their first real sense of what lay ahead. On arrival in Pinzolo, we collected ski gear, settled into our hotel, and got a briefing ahead of lessons starting the next day.

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Day 2 – First Time on the Slopes

Our first day of ski lessons was a fantastic start. Pupils were grouped into beginner and intermediate levels, and the determination shown was incredible. From first-time skiers mastering the basics to others building confidence on steeper slopes, progress was already being made. With light snowfall expected midweek and clearer skies forecast later, pupils were eager to explore more in the coming days.

Day 3 – Progress and Exploration

One of our beginner groups reached the higher blue runs, and intermediates explored the Doss del Sabion area – a 32km ski region with 14 lifts. Despite low visibility and wet conditions, everyone showed great resilience. Lunch



SCRIPTURE UNION

Junior SU Report

As another year of Junior SU comes to an end, we are very thankful to God for the many opportunities that we have had to share the Gospel message with our pupils and to help build them up in

their faith. We have been so excited to meet each Thursday with the pupils who faithfully attend Junior SU, and we give thanks for each of them and for their commitment to Scripture Union. During our meetings, there is always time for prayer, a message from God's word and lots of silly games and quizzes. The Tuesday prayer meeting is also a time of encouragement, as pupils and staff pray together. We hope that everyone comes along for the prayer and not just the free toast!!

We have been encouraged by the number of devoted staff who come along to SU each week, to help with this work. Their input has been a blessing. It has also been amazing to see Year 10 pupils stepping up and leading some of the meetings. It's not easy for our young folk to do this, but we



know that God sees and rewards all that is done for him!

At the end of this year, we must bid farewell to two devoted SU helpers – Mr Agnew and Mrs Sloan – as they leave Cookstown High School to take up posts in other schools. We will miss their support so much and thank them for being

'salt and light' during their time in the High School. We want to wish them God's richest blessings in the future, and we know that He will use them for his glory in their new schools.

The work of Scripture Union belongs to the Lord, and we need His guidance and the blessing of the Holy Spirit, if we are going to see it bear fruit. Please continue to pray that young lives will be positively impacted through it.

"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1Timothy 4:12.

The Junior SU Team.



SENIOR SU REPORT

As another school year draws to a close, we pause to reflect on the incredible journey we've shared in Senior Scripture Union. Meeting faithfully after school every Friday, our time together has become a space to grow in faith, find encouragement, and simply enjoy one another's company as we navigate the highs and lows of school life.

At the heart of SU is our passionate Sixth Form Committee, who have worked tirelessly each week to plan, organise, and lead our sessions. Their commitment has made each gathering meaningful, from arranging snacks and fun games to coordinating thought-provoking Bible talks and discussions. Whether led by one of our own or a guest speaker from a local church or Christian organisation, each message has reminded us of our identity in Christ and God's unchanging love, even in the midst of exam pressures and life's challenges.

Our SU family has been more than just a Friday club — it's been a support system. Together, we've prayed, laughed, learned, and leaned on each other as we face the unique journey of being young people of faith in today's world. We've also had the privilege of reaching beyond our group by fundraising through bun

sales to support charitable causes, and sharing the hope of Jesus with our wider school community, particularly during the school carol service at Christmas.

We are especially grateful for the teachers and staff who have generously given their time and support to make SU possible each week. Without their encouragement and presence, none of this would have been achievable.

As we look back in thankfulness, we also say goodbye to Mr. Brown and Miss Hanna, who are moving on to exciting new chapters in their lives. Their kindness, leadership, and unwavering support have left a lasting impact, and they will be deeply missed.

We close this year holding onto the promise found in Philippians 1:6:

"Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey. May we continue to grow in faith, love, and boldness wherever God leads us next.

— Senior SU Committee

SUPER CURRICULUM

In March, six talented Year 13 students - Kayleigh, Niamh, Lois, Leah, Katie, and Kym - showcased their exceptional oratory skills in the school's annual Super-Curriculum TED Talk Challenge. Each girl delivered a thought-provoking presentation on diverse topics inspired by their AS Level studies.

The subjects ranged from ethical dilemmas like the ban on animal testing for cosmetics and the inclusion of mixed-gender sports, to theological debates on religious views on divorce and the nature of morality. The girls

dedicated significant time to researching and crafting their speeches, demonstrating their commitment and passion.

Their presentations, delivered in the lecture theatre in front of Miss Evans, Mr Forbes and other staff members, were of outstanding quality. The event was not only a learning experience about various topics but also a journey of self-discovery for the girls as they honed their skills as orators and presenters.

Annual Super-Curriculum TED Talk Challenge



ATHLETICS



- Keeva McElhennon
- Bronze in 1500m
- Yara Lopes
- Gold in Shot Put

This year's athletics season began in hurried fashion, with a late Easter leaving little time for early groundwork. Despite the tight turnaround, the team responded with energy and focus. The track was swiftly lined, pits freshly dug, and equipment—dusted off and ready for action. Athletes committed to a demanding training schedule of three sessions a week, all in preparation for the first competition in May. Though the start was rushed, the spirit and determination of the team were unmistakably alive.

District 'E' Athletics Championships

On Wednesday 7th May, 32 of our athletes rose to the occasion at the District 'E' Athletics Championships, held at the Mary Peters Track in Belfast. They delivered a series of outstanding performances, with seven athletes qualifying for the Ulster Championships—a testament to their hard work and talent.

Year 8

- Rita Zhuk
- Bronze in Long Jump
- Ronnie Jackson

Year 9



- Lily Cahoon
- Silver in High Jump
- Bella Weir – Bronze in Shot Put
- Year 10
- Luke Johnston
- Bronze in Javelin

Ulster Schools Athletics Championships

The momentum continued into the Ulster Schools Championships. On Wednesday 14th May, five of our qualifiers returned to the Mary Peters



Track for the Minor and Junior competitions, while one dedicated Year 8 athlete competed on Saturday 17th May at the Mini event.

- Yara Lopes (Yr 10)
- Junior Shot Put



- Luke Johnston (Yr 10)
- Javelin
- Keeva McElhennon (Yr 10)
- 1500m
- Lily Cahoon (Yr 9)
- High Jump
- Bella Weir (Yr 9)
- Minor Shot Put
- Ronnie Jackson (Yr 8)
- Long Jump

Despite facing fierce compe-

tition from the best athletes across the province, our pupils gave it their all and represented the school with pride. The glorious weather added to the occasion—though it posed a challenge for Keeva, who showed remarkable resilience running the 1500m in high temperatures.

A special mention goes to Lily Cahoon, who achieved a personal best of 1.39m in the High Jump, securing an impressive 5th place at Ulster level!

County Sports

The sun was shining in Campsie, Omagh, as our athletes took to the track for the final competition of the season on 10th June.

It was a day filled with determination, teamwork, and some incredible performances. While some just missed out on medals, many of our talented athletes brought home a range of gold, silver

and bronze medals across various events! A fantastic way to round off the season!

A special mention to Lily Cahoon, who came incredibly close to setting another county record in the high jump. She was only 1cm off this record.

All of our athletes demonstrated incredible determination and sportsmanship throughout their competitions. Regardless of medal success, we are immensely proud of them—not only for their performances on the track but also for the exemplary behaviour and manners they showed beyond it.

A massive thank you to Miss Kerr and Mrs. Cheevers for their commitment to coaching and also to Mr Glendinning who assisted with officiating at events at the District Championships.



BADMINTON



Stage	Match	Winner	Score
Quarter Finals	Ashley & Ross	Ashley	22 - 20
	Johan & Patrick	Johan	21 - 4
	Charlie & George	Charlie	21 - 2
	Hanz & Ben	Hanz	21 - 6
Semi Finals	Johan & Ashley	Johan	21 - 10
	Hanz & Charlie	Hanz	21 - 8
Finals (Best of 3)	Hanz & Johan	Hanz	15 - 7, 15 - 9

BOYS HOCKEY

Cookstown High School Completes Historic Treble of Schools Cups Wins



Cookstown High School has made history once again by completing a remarkable treble of Schools Cups victories, securing the U13 Bannister Cup, U14 Ferris Cup, and U15

their dominance in junior school hockey.

The school has now won 8 out of the last 9 junior Schools Cups, a testament to their consistent excellence at the grassroots level of the sport. The U13 Bannister Cup, U14 Ferris Cup, and U15 Richardson Cup wins have reinforced Cookstown High School's reputation for outstanding performance in Ulster.



Richardson Cup in a spectacular display of talent and determination. This impressive achievement marks the second consecutive year the school has claimed all three prestigious titles, continuing

their dominance in junior school hockey. Miss G. Evans, Principal of Cookstown High School, expressed immense pride in the team's performance: "We are incredibly proud of our students and their dedication to excellence. Achieving this treble for the second year in a row is a testament to the hard work, com-

mitment, and sportsmanship of both our players and coaching staff. This success is a reflection of our core values of Excellence, Opportunity, and Support. We strive to create an environment where every student has the opportunity to excel, and this achievement demonstrates the power of our supportive community in nurturing the potential of our athletes. We will continue to work hard to ensure that these values remain at the heart of everything we do."

Mr M. Haycock, Head of Physical Education at Cookstown High School, also shared his excitement: "This is a fantastic achievement and a true reflection of the commitment and passion of our students. Winning 8 out of the last 9 junior Schools Cups is no small feat, and it speaks to

the skill and determination of our athletes. However, none of this would be possible without the unwavering support from our volunteer coaches at Cookstown Hockey Club and the incredible involvement of parents. Their dedication and hard work have been invaluable in helping us reach this level of success, and we are incredibly grateful for their ongoing support. We look forward to continuing to build on this success and inspiring even more athletes to strive for excellence."

Cookstown High School's con-



tinued success in junior hockey has earned them well-deserved recognition, and this latest treble is expected to inspire even more athletes at the school to pursue excellence both on and off the pitch. With a solid foundation in place, the school is undoubtedly poised to achieve even greater heights in the years to come.

BANNISTER BOWL VICTORY

Cookstown High School U13s Secure Third Consecutive Bannister Bowl Victory

Cookstown High School 2-1 Friends' School Lisburn

Cookstown High School's U13 hockey team continued their dominance of the Bannister Bowl with a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Friends' School Lisburn in Tuesday's final at Banbridge. The young Cookstown side showed grit, determination, and attacking flair to lift the trophy for the third successive year, reinforcing their reputation as one of the top hockey schools in the province.

In a tense and competitive encounter, Friends took the lead midway through the first half with a well-taken goal from open play, giving them an early advantage. Cookstown responded strongly, controlling possession and pressing Friends deep into

their own half. Their efforts were soon rewarded when Riley Waters equalised, finishing off a well-worked move after excellent build-up play from Henry Lee. Lee's precise pass split the Friends' defence, allowing Waters to slot the ball into the bottom corner, sending the travelling Cookstown supporters into celebration.

With the game finely poised, Cookstown's leadership and resilience came to the fore in the second half. Year 8 Mason McAleece was superb at centre midfield, controlling the tempo and distributing the ball effectively. The defensive pairing of Sam Johnston and Jacob Friend was outstanding at centre-back, providing stability and breaking up Friends' attacks, while Daniel Hood was very strong at left-back, offering both defensive so-

lidity and attacking support. Daryl Frank, still only in Year 8, showed incredible pace and energy throughout the match. Vice Captain Jake Simpson was excellent at linking the play from centre forward, creating opportunities and keeping the attack fluid. Captain Archie Hall led the line superbly up front, ensuring composure and structure in their play. The breakthrough came with just four minutes remaining as Cookstown once again showcased their attacking prowess. This time, it was Harry Coombes who turned provider, delivering a perfectly weighted ball into the path of Waters, who applied the finishing touch for his second goal of the match.

Friends threw everything forward in the closing stages, but goalkeeper Cameron Johnston

did everything that was asked of him, making crucial saves to keep Cookstown in front, but Riley Donnell produced a crucial goal-line clearance in the final few minutes to preserve Cookstown's lead. As the final whistle blew, jubilant scenes followed as Cookstown celebrated another famous victory in their proud hockey history.

Speaking after the match, Coach Mrs C Hall praised his team's character and teamwork. "I'm so proud of the boys. They worked tirelessly from start to finish and showed real determination to get over the line. Winning this competition three years in a row is an incredible achievement, and full credit goes to the entire squad for their hard work."

The win marks yet another milestone for Cookstown High School's hockey programme, which continues to develop and nurture young talent. With such a strong foundation in place, the future looks bright for this talented group of players as they progress through the school ranks.



FERRIS CUP VICTORY

U14s Claim Third Consecutive Ferris Cup Title

Cookstown High School 7-1 Banbridge Academy

Cookstown High School's U14 hockey team made history by securing their third consecutive Ferris Cup title with a dominant 7-0 win over Banbridge Academy in the final at Havelock Park. The match, which kicked off at 5pm, was played under the bright sun and saw Cookstown put in a clinical performance in front of a vocal crowd. Umpires Julie Fisher and George Redpath oversaw a match in which Cookstown showed their class from the very first whistle.

The game started at a fast pace, and Cookstown quickly asserted control. Archie Hall opened the scoring with a deflection from close range after a well-placed pass into the circle. Minutes later, Matthew Watters extended the lead with a stunning deflection into the roof of the net, following a precision pass

from captain Noah Cuddy. The team's dominance continued as Stanley Jackson made it 3-0, finishing calmly at the back post to add to the growing lead in the first quarter.

By halftime, Cookstown had furthered their advantage to 4-0, with Watters grabbing his second goal of the match. A quick spin and a composed finish gave him his brace, and Banbridge was left scrambling to find a response. However, Cookstown's defence remained impenetrable, with TJ Kelly, Will Redford, Luke Johnston, and Dylan Hughes all playing key roles in shutting down Banbridge's attacks. At the same time, Marcus Gillis in goal made crucial saves to maintain the clean sheet.

As the game progressed, Banbridge kept pressing in search of a way back into the match, but Cookstown's defensive organisation held firm. Henry Lee played a key role in mid-

field, supporting the defence while also helping the attack with his creative play. On the right-hand side, Joshua Ferguson's pace was a constant threat, with his runs stretching the Banbridge defence and creating space for his teammates.

In the final quarter, Cookstown kicked things into high gear once again. Hall found the net with a brilliant reverse sweep finish to make it 5-0, further putting the game beyond Banbridge's reach. Noah Cuddy, who has now won three Ferris Cup finals in a row, scored in all three finals, sealing the win with a dazzling solo effort, cutting in from the sideline before finishing with confidence to take the score to 6-0. Cuddy added one more for the team with a powerful penalty corner strike, bringing the score to 7-0 and rounding off a perfect performance.

Throughout the match, Cookstown's collective effort was evident, with players working tirelessly both in defence and attack. From the back line to the forwards, every player contributed to the victory. Banbridge Academy never gave up but could not break down Cookstown's solid team performance.

With the win, Cookstown High School claimed their third consecutive Ferris Cup title, a remarkable achievement that reflects the hard work and dedication of the team. The players now turn their attention to the John Waring U14 Irish Schools competition in mid-April, where they will aim to add another prestigious trophy to their collection.

Cookstown's U14 Ferris Cup team was made up of Marcus Gillis (Vice Captain), Dylan Hughes, TJ Kelly, Will Redford, Luke Johnston, Joshua Ferguson (Vice Captain), Noah Cuddy (Captain), Henry Lee, Archie Hall, Stanley Jackson, and Matthew Watters. They were supported by substitutes Neal Rea, Daniel Brownlee, Jake Simpson, Riley Donnell, and Mason McAleece, all of whom played important roles throughout the match.

Coach Stephen Cuddy said after the match: "I am incredibly proud of the boys today. Their performance was fantastic, and it's been a privilege to watch them grow and work together as a team over the years. To win the Ferris Cup three years in a row is a remarkable achievement, and each player has played their part in making this success possible. We're now focused on the next challenge, the All-Ireland competition, and we'll continue to push forward with the same determination and team spirit that got us here."



RICHARDSON CUP VICTORY

U15s Win Richardson Cup for Second Consecutive Year

Cookstown High School 2-0 RBAI

Cookstown High School's U15 hockey team made history on Tuesday by securing a 2-0 victory over RBAI in the Richardson Cup final, marking their second consecutive win in the competition and completing a remarkable TREBLE of schools' cup victories at U13, U14, and U15 levels for the second year in a row.

The match was a repeat of last year's U14 final, and Cookstown showed once again why they are the dominant force in schoolboy hockey. From the outset, Cookstown set the tone with intense pressure on the RBAI defence, leading to an early breakthrough.

In the first quarter, it was Noah Cuddy who made the decisive impact. His relentless pressing forced the RBAI centre-back into a mistake, stealing the ball and charging towards the goal. As he entered the circle, he was fouled by the RBAI goalkeeper, earning his team a penalty stroke.

Stepping up to take the stroke was Cookstown's captain and Irish U16 international, Charlie Costelloe. Costelloe made no mistake, calmly slotting the ball past the keeper to give Cookstown the lead.

The second quarter saw Cookstown double their advantage. A well-executed drag flick from Callum Hewitt found the back of the net, putting the U15s 2-0 up. The team controlled the game from this point on, with RBAI unable to break down Cookstown's solid defensive setup.

Standout performances came from all corners of the team. TJ Kelly, playing at left-midfield, and David Cuddy, in central defence, were exceptional, constantly driving the team forward and breaking up any RBAI attacks. At the back, Ben Barbour and Dylan Hughes were rock-solid in the full-back positions, while Josh Ferguson used his pace to great effect on the right wing. Bobbi Robinson's calm control in the centre of the park was pivotal in managing posses-

sion and dictating the tempo of the game.

In the attacking third, Caleb Crooks and Matthew Watters



were always a threat, and their work rate and creativity kept RBAI on the back foot. Cookstown saw out the final quarter with composure, ensuring that RBAI had few chances to mount a serious challenge.

A special mention goes to goalkeeper Marcus Gillis, who made three brilliant saves, keeping Cookstown's clean sheet intact and ensuring the team's victory. His agility and quick reflexes were crucial in preserving the lead, especially when RBAI put pressure on in the latter stages of the match.

Coach Julian Costelloe reflected on the win, saying, "I couldn't be prouder of the team. They've worked so hard this season, and their commitment has paid off. Winning the Richardson Cup again, and completing the TREBLE, is a remarkable achievement. The boys showed great character and resilience throughout the

match, and the teamwork on display was exceptional. This victory is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the whole team."

This victory adds to Cookstown High School's already impressive record, with the U15 team following in the footsteps of their U13 and U14 counterparts, who also claimed their respective cups. With this historic TREBLE, Cookstown has once again shown their dominance at the school level in Northern Ireland hockey.

Cookstown U15s Richardson Cup Team: Marcus Gillis, Dylan Hughes, Charlie Costelloe (Captain), David Cuddy, Ben Barbour, Joshua Ferguson, Bobbi Robinson (Vice-Captain), TJ Kelly, Noah Cuddy, Callum Hewitt, Caleb Crooks, Christian Fejkiel, Luke Johnston, Matthew Watters, Stanley Jackson, Will Redford.



WARING CUP

Cookstown High School's U14s Defend Their All-Ireland Hockey Title

We look back with pride on one of the standout sporting achievements of the year – Cookstown High School's U14 boys' hockey team retaining the John Waring All-Ireland Championship. It marked the second consecutive year that the school brought home this prestigious national title, capping off an exceptional run of success for this talented group.

The tournament, which brought together the top U14 school teams from across Ireland, saw Cookstown High go unbeaten in five matches. The boys opened with a cagey 0-0 draw against Aston before building momentum with a 2-0 win over Wesley, thanks to two well-taken goals from Noah Cuddy. Next came a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Bandon, with Stanley Jackson grabbing both goals. The team looked increasingly confident as the tournament progressed,

dispatching King's Hospital 3-0 with a brace from Archie Hall and a goal from Joshua Ferguson. The decisive match against Banbridge ended 1-0, with Cuddy once again finding the net to secure the title.

This success completed what became known as a quadruple-double – Cookstown High School winning the Bannister Bowl (U13), Ferris Cup (U14), Richardson Cup (U15), and the John Waring All-Ireland (U14) in two consecutive seasons. It was a remarkable achievement and a clear reflection of the depth of talent and strong coaching culture within the school's hockey programme.

In the build-up to the tournament, the team trained three times a week, often adding extra lunchtime sessions to refine their skills and tactics. That level of commitment and preparation undoubtedly laid the foundation for their suc-

cess.

The squad included: Noah Cuddy (Captain), Marcus Gillis (Vice Captain), Dylan Hughes, TJ Kelly, Will Redford, Luke Johnston, Henry Lee, Joshua Ferguson (Vice Captain), Archie Hall, Stanley Jackson, Matthew Watters, Neil Rea, Mason McAleece, Jake Simpson, Christian Fejkiel, Cameron Johnston, Riley Donnell and Daniel Brownlee.

Reflecting on the team's achievement, Mr Haycock, Head of PE, said:

"This group has set a very high standard, not just in terms of results but also in how they've represented the school. Their commitment, teamwork and attitude both on and off the pitch have been outstanding. To win this title two years running is something very few schools achieve – it speaks volumes about their character."

Captain Noah Cuddy also shared his thoughts:

"It's been a brilliant experience playing with this team. Everyone worked really hard for each other all season, and we're proud of what we've achieved. Winning the John Waring again is a special feeling, and we're grateful for all the support from our coaches, parents and the school."

Many of the players also represented Cookstown Hockey Club, and it was encouraging to see their development and experience at club level translating so well onto the school stage. The dedication shown by the players, both in training and throughout the tournament, was admirable, and they represented Cookstown High School with great character and sportsmanship.



IRISH SCHOOLS TOURNAMENT

Youngest 1st XI squad bodes well for future progression

1st XI Boys Hockey - Irish Schools Tournament

At the end of October the 1st XI boys travelled to Dublin to take part in the prestigious All Ireland Hockey Tournament where the top 16 teams in Ireland play for the Tasmanian Shield.

The boys were drawn in a tough group against

Middleton from Munster, Friends from Ulster and Newpark from Leinster.

In the first game they lost narrowly 2-1 to the Munster champions in a game that could have gone either way.

Match 2 against Friends was a very tough game with the Lisburn school taking their chances and

coming out 3-0 winners.

Match 3 had to be abandoned after one of our players received a serious injury which required hospital which he thankfully made a full recovery from.

Match 4 saw a very close affair with Dublin High School who scored with 2 minutes to go to clinch a 1-0 win.

The boys can great heart in 4 very close matches against the top school teams in Ireland.

We had the youngest squad in the tournament which bodes well for the future and the boys gained great experience and showed excellent progression over the course of the tournament.



FOOTBALL - U13

A Year of Growth and Grit



The 2024/25 season was a memorable one for the Cookstown High School U13 Boys' Football Team, who competed in the ever-competitive Coleraine and District League. Under the guidance of Mr McKenna, the team showed tremendous progress, commitment, and team spirit throughout a closely contested group stage.

This year's competition featured two groups, with the top two teams from each progressing to the semi-finals. For Cookstown, qualification came down to the very last match – and although they narrowly missed out by just one point, the campaign will be remembered as a breakthrough season, full of promising performances and individual development.

Group Stage Summary

Match 1 – Cross and Passion, Ballycastle (Away) – Lost 3–2
Cookstown opened their campaign with a narrow defeat

in an entertaining and hard-fought match.

Scorers:

- Own goal (forced by Olly Ross)
- Djorkoeff Sousa

Match 2 – Draw 0–0

A tightly contested encounter saw Cookstown control large portions of the game, but they were denied the win by an outstanding performance from the opposition goalkeeper.

Match 3 – Ballymoney High School (Home) – Won 5–1
Cookstown's best performance of the group stage came at home, where they delivered a clinical attacking display.

Scorers:

- Zack Nellins (1st minute)
- Djorkoeff Sousa (10th minute)
- Djorkoeff Sousa (25th minute)
- Djorkoeff Sousa (27th minute – completing a hat-trick)
- Zack Nellins (second half, 10th minute – assisted by Noah Young)

Match 4 – Limavady High School (Home) – Drew 0–0
In a must-win match to reach the semi-finals, Cookstown dominated possession and created several chances, but Limavady defended resolutely to earn a goalless draw they needed to progress. The result meant Cookstown fell just short of a semi-final place.

Progress and Promise

This season saw a huge improvement from U12 level. Players developed noticeably in both technical ability and tactical understanding, boosted by the arrival of several talented players from this year's U12 squad. The team showed real maturity in their performances and a growing understanding of how to play as a cohesive unit.

Training was always enjoyable and well-attended, with up to 30 players regularly involved. The enthusiasm and effort from the whole group made it a challenge to select

the matchday squad of 15 – a sign of the depth and competitiveness in the squad.

Acknowledgements

A sincere thank you goes to this year's kit sponsor – PR Racking Inspectors, Cookstown. Their support ensured the team took to the pitch with a sense of pride and professionalism.

Matchday Squad Players

- Cameron Donnelly (Captain)
- Reuben Allen
- Riley Watters
- Vasco Russo
- Jacob Friend
- Zack Nellins
- Kyle Kilgore
- Jack Reid
- Reuben Larmour
- Alfie L Johnston
- Djorkoeff Sousa
- Michael Tihomirovs
- Riley Donnell
- Joshua Donnelly
- Keegan Kelly (U12)
- Noah Young (U12)
- Olly Ross (U12)
- Mason McAleece (U12)

Looking Ahead

While the team were unlucky to miss out on the knockout stages, the progress made this year has laid strong foundations for future success. With continued effort, development, and team spirit, this group has every potential to make a big impact in the years to come. Well done to all involved on a fantastic season of growth, determination, and football.

FOOTBALL - U16

A Golden Generation



The 2024/25 football season will be remembered as a historic one at Cookstown High School, as the U16 Boys Football Team capped off a remarkable four-year journey in the Coleraine and District League by lifting yet another title.

Under the leadership of Mr McKenna, this exceptional group of players reached four consecutive league finals – at U13, U14, U15, and U16 level – and secured an incredible three titles, highlighting their dominance and consistency throughout their school football careers (note U12 competition did not run due to covid lockdowns).

Group Stage Highlights
The group stage saw the boys battle through four tough fixtures, starting with a thrilling 4–3 away win over Limavady.

In the second game, Cookstown put on a masterclass in a 6–0 win over Coleraine Grammar School.

In one of the most dramatic matches of the year, the boys travelled to St Patrick's, Maghera, and came from 3–0 down at half-time to earn a 3–3 draw.

The final group match was at home to Limavady Grammar School, last year's runners-up, and ended in a fiercely contested 3–3 draw.

Knockout Brilliance
In the semi-final, Cookstown faced Ballymoney High School. A composed and clinical performance saw them progress with a 2–1 victory.

In the final, they once again met Limavady Grammar School. The game lived up to expectations, but Cookstown emerged victorious with a brilliant 2–1 win, securing the U16 title.

A Team Built on Talent and Unity
Over four years, this squad has lost just two matches, a phenomenal record that reflects their discipline, skill, and determination.

Even more impressively, 22 players in the squad received playing time this season – showing the strength in depth and the commitment to team development.

Several members of the team have represented Tyrone and Northern Ireland, underlining the exceptional talent within the group and the strength of football at Cookstown High School.

Coach Mr McKenna commented: "It's been an incredible journey with this team. Four finals, three titles, and memories that will last a lifetime. Every player has contributed, and they've set a new benchmark for school football at Cookstown High. I couldn't be prouder."

A Word of Thanks
The team would also like to extend a sincere thank you to this season's kit sponsor – Aaron's Gym, Cookstown. Their support helped ensure the players looked professional and felt confident every time they stepped onto the pitch.

Sponsorship from local businesses plays a vital role in supporting school sport, and we are incredibly grateful.

2024/25 U16 Boys Football Squad

- Ryan Beresford
- Toby Dallas
- Jake Donnelly
- Jamie Ferguson
- Nathan Ferson
- Macauley Harkness
- Matthew Hayman
- Edward Irwin
- Jack Johnston
- Isaac Kelso
- Daniels Levsins
- Oliver McCann
- Charlie McKenzie
- Harry McKenzie (Captain)
- Dionisio Mota
- Benjamin Patterson
- Jack Patterson
- Jack Price
- Ethan Redford
- Maverick Riches
- Finlay Ross
- Gonçalo Russo
- Luke Turkington
- Ben Gibson

A Legacy to Inspire

This team has not only brought home silverware but has also inspired future generations of Cookstown High School footballers. Their passion, pride, and perseverance have left a lasting legacy that will be remembered for years to come.

Congratulations to the players, coaches, and supporters for an outstanding season – a true golden generation of Cookstown football.

FINLAY ROSS

Linfield midfielder Finlay Ross has enjoyed a busy season with Northern Ireland, starting with a trip to Estonia in September to face the hosts and Finland in Tallinn. This was in preparation for the Victory Shield, an annual U16s tournament featuring NI, the Republic of Ireland, Wales,



and Scotland. Held in October, Finlay starred in a win over hosts Scotland, but NI lost out on the trophy to the Republic after a tight 1-0 defeat in the final game.

February saw Finlay on his travels again, this time for a UEFA development tournament in Cyprus where NI faced Romania, Scotland, and Cyprus. Finlay is now looking forward to the SuperCup NI in July, where he will represent County Tyrone in a group including West Cork, Glasgow giants Rangers, and the mighty Manchester United!



TYRONE U16 SUPER CUP REPRESENTATIVES



FINLAY ROSS



JACK JOHNSTON



MATTHEW HAYMAN



TOBY DALLAS

FOOTBALL - U14

The Year 10 football team wrapped up an exciting and competitive season, showing great determination and team spirit throughout their league campaign.

The team faced a challenging group stage, finishing with a balanced record: 1 Win, 1 Draw and 1 Loss.

This solid performance was enough to secure a place in the league semi-finals, a testament to the team's resilience and ability to grind

out results when it mattered most.

In the semi-final, the team came up against a strong Dominican College side. Despite a valiant effort and a goal to their name, the match ended in a 3-1 defeat. The boys showed great character and never gave up, pushing until the final whistle.

Throughout the season, the players demonstrated excellent teamwork, commitment, and sportsmanship. Each

match brought improvement, and the squad grew in confidence and cohesion. Their journey this year has laid a strong foundation for future success.

A big thank you to the coaching staff, supporters, and families for their encouragement and dedication. With the experience gained this season, the Year 10 team is well-positioned to come back even stronger next year.

FOOTBALL - U15

While the scoreboard may not have reflected it, the Year 11 football team's season was a true display of character, commitment, and camaraderie.

Although the team didn't register a win this season, they approached every match with 100% effort and unwavering determination. Their performance against Limavady High School was a particular highlight—a tightly contested game that showcased the squad's grit and growing cohesion.

One of the standout features of this team was their exceptional team spirit. Regardless of the results, the players supported each other on and off the pitch, demonstrating maturity, resilience, and a strong sense of unity that made them a pleasure to coach and watch.

A special mention goes to Matthew Donnelly, who finished the season as the team's top goal scorer. His efforts in front of goal were a bright spark and a testament to his hard work and consistency throughout the campaign.

This season was about more than just results—it was about growth, learning, and building a foundation for the future. The team should be proud of their journey, and with continued effort and belief, success is surely on the horizon.

A big thank you to the coaching staff, supporters, and families for their ongoing encouragement. We look forward to seeing what this resilient group can achieve next season!

GOLF



JUNIOR U16 IRISH QUALIFYING COMPETITION AT OMAGH GOLF CLUB

On Tuesday 17th September 2024, four of our pupils travelled to Omagh Golf Club to take part in the Junior Irish Schools' Qualifying competition, ran by Golf Ireland.

It took place in stunning weather conditions, with clear skies and warm temperatures creating an ideal setting for the players. The course was in excellent shape, with the greens playing like glass, providing a real challenge for the competitors.



Caleb made his golfing debut for CHS in the tournament. He showed great promise, remaining composed throughout the day, scoring 23 points in his first school competition – a commendable effort for a new player.

Noah had a solid round, scoring an impressive 30 points. His approach play was particularly strong allowing him

to navigate the course with confidence and consistency, contributing to his respectable score.

Finlay also performed well, handling the course with maturity beyond his years. He stayed focused throughout his round, finishing with 22 points.

The standout performance of the day came from Ellie, who scored 33 points, including a run of 3 consecutive birdies on the back nine. Her skill and determination paid off as she secured second place in the qualifying competition, earning her a spot in the national finals this coming April.

Overall, it was a successful day for our Junior golfers, with each player delivering a solid performance on a well prepared course. We look forward to supporting Ellie as she represents Ulster Schools' in the Irish Schools' finals.

Next week it is Jack's turn as he travels to Roe Park to play in the Senior qualifying event and we wish him every success.

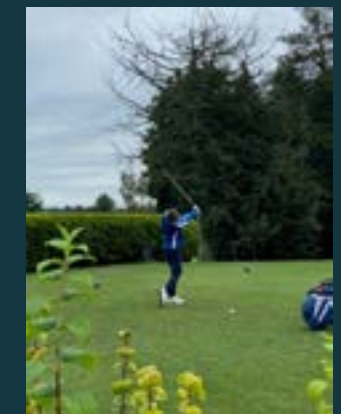


KILLYMOON CUP 2025

The Killymoon Cup, sponsored by McAleer & Rushe, took place on Monday 14th April 2025. It was a fantastic success, a day filled with superb golf, competitive spirit, and brilliant weather that showcased the talent of our young golfers.

With the sun shining down

on Killymoon, the competi-



tion was fierce but friendly, as players battled it out across the course, demonstrating skill, determination, and sportsmanship.

A huge congratulations to all participants, and special recognition to our performers:

CHS entered 3 teams this year. Team 1: Aaron Abernethy, Ellie Costelloe, Archie Hall and Tristan Purdy.

Team 2: Noah Cuddy, Charlie Costelloe and Ben Barbour.

Team 3: Finlay Ross, Jack Patterson, Caleb Gates and Joshua Gates.



Team 1 came 4th over all with 107 points, 11 points behind the winning team.

Individual success came for Archie, Finlay and Ellie. Archie was 3rd in the boys' competi-





tion with a score of 75. Finlay secured the longest drive and Ellie was nearest the pin.

Irish Schools' Junior Girls Golf Championships

In May, Ellie participated in the Irish Schools' Junior Girls Golf Championships held in Milltown GC Dublin, where she finished 7th with 35 points.

Ellie is the first pupil from Cookstown High School to qualify for an Irish Schools' Championship which is an amazing accomplishment.

Ellie we are delighted for you, well done!

CHS house Golf Competition – June 2025 “We Survived the

Rain”

What a day! Wet shoes, heroic swings, and plenty of confusion over who actually won



what. A huge well done to everyone who took part in this years House Golf Competition! Despite a bit of rain, the spirit was high, the golf was competitive, and the scores



were impressive. Here is how it all shook out...

House Results

Lissan – Champions!

Drum
Coolnafranky
Killymoon

Nearest the Pin

Congratulations to Bobbi, who clinched the prize eventually—after Charlie thought he had it in the bag for quite a while!

Longest Drive
Congratulations to Matt, who claimed victory in the Longest Drive competition

with a booming shot down the 12th! Both Noah and Jack P looked confident and were eyeing the title, but Matt pulled it out of the bag with a drive that left no doubt.

(84)
2nd – Noah (82)
1st – Jack (81)

Soaked socks, solid swings, and a heap of laughs—thank you to every player, helper, and heckler who made it a day to remember. Same time next year? Maybe with sunshine?

So, to all you aspiring golfers, get out on the course over the summer months and get your handicap low enough so we can have more entries in next year's competitions.

Mrs C Hall



Golfer of the Year – Medal Competition (Nett Scores)

In reverse order:
4th – Jack & Callum (41 points)
3rd – Archie (42 points)
2nd – Caleb (44 points)
1st – Jake, with an outstanding 59 points

Gross Prize Winners
In reverse order:
4th – Archie (86)
3rd – Aaron & Caleb



GIRLS HOCKEY

1ST XI



This season has been an unforgettable one for the 1st XI, filled with challenge, growth, and some of the best memories we've made on the pitch. From our first fixture to the Intermediate Cup final, the team gave their all and showed relentless determination throughout.

We began the season with a strong 5-0 win in a friendly against Cambridge House, delivering a fantastic team performance. Several younger players made the step up to the 1st XI and slotted in seamlessly, enhancing the skill within the team. It was the perfect start to the season and set the tone for what was to come.

The Super League began shortly after, and we faced some tough competition early on. Our first league match ended in a 2-0 loss to Dromore, followed by a 2-0 defeat to Belfast High, with both goals frustratingly coming late in the game. But we didn't let the results shake our confidence. A hard fought 1-1 draw with Lagan showed the fight in our squad, and although we fell short against Lurgan, we bounced back with a brilliant 2-0 win over Raphoe, where everything finally came together. We finished our league campaign against RSD, another tough match, but the work rate and effort never dropped.

We trained every Monday and Wednesday after school, as well as bringing in strength and conditioning sessions every Thursday morning at 8am. The effort everyone put in at training translated directly into how we performed in the upcoming matches.

The biggest highlight of the year was without a doubt the Intermediate Cup. In the quarter-final against Wellington, Lois slotted away a composed stroke early in the game. They equalised with a stroke of their own, but Sophie then converted a new short corner drill in the third quarter, increasing our lead. The final quarter saw Ellie score a flowing move that started with a run along



1st XI



the wing, before Sophie impressively added a second short corner goal to wrap up an impressive 4–1 win.

We built on that momentum with a series of friendlies to prepare for the semi-final. We had a 1–0 win against Foyle, where we played some of our best passing hockey all season, followed by a 1–1 draw with Carrick.

In the semi-final against Lagan, we came out flying and went 1–0 up in the first quarter with an excellent goal from Pheobe, winning multiple short corners and dominating the early stages. Lagan responded well and managed to equalise in the final quarter, but Ellie stepped up in the last seconds of the game with a stunning reverse into the bottom corner. This sealed us a thrilling 2–1 victory and booked our place in the final for the second year in a row.

The final saw us face Kilkeel again, a team we knew well from last season. The game was tight from the first whistle, with both teams battling hard for every ball. We created good chances and won many short corners, including a powerful drag flick from Lois that was brilliantly saved by their keeper. Kilkeel had their moments too, but our defence stayed composed and cleared the danger very quickly. After a goalless draw, the match went to run-ins, where we were unfortunately beaten 4–2. It was such a fine margin to lose by, and on a different day the result could've gone our way. None the less, we held our heads high and walked off that pitch as Intermediate Cup silver medallists, which is something to be incredibly proud of. We're especially proud of the girls who stepped up to take the run-ins in front of such a huge crowd - it takes composure to do that under pressure, and they represented us brilliantly.

I still can't believe school hockey is over. These past seven years have meant so much to me – from early Saturday mornings piling onto the bus half asleep, to playing matches in every kind of weather imaginable. Some of my favourite memo-

ries come from training, where we spent more time laughing than anything else - turning everything into a joke such as our Happy Gilmore swings. The bus journeys were just as memorable, especially blasting Downtown on the way home after winning the semi-final. Hockey has honestly been the best part of my school years, and I've made friends for life because of it.

A massive thank you as always to Miss Kerr, Mr Stewart and Mrs Johnston for your endless support, dedication, and belief in us. The time and effort you've put into this team has made a huge impact, and every single one of us are so thankful.

To the girls - I wish you all the best of luck for next season, and I know you'll continue to go from strength-to-strength. I'll be cheering you on every step of the way as your biggest supporter on the sidelines.

Rachel Brown



2nd XI

The 2nd XI hockey scoreline this year says otherwise but as a team here has been many successes and wins through making new friends and growing individually as players, improving our skills and fitness. We have worked hard focusing on new skills this season through weekly training sessions and early morning fitness classes. Our aim was to improve our overall fitness levels thus helping our performances on the pitch. This allowed us to become stronger as a team, whilst listen-

ing to feedback and taking on our weaknesses in our weekly matches.

Many match scores have been unreflective of the hard work and resilience the team has put in this year, (minus one particular match involving a lack of focus after Christmas break), however we have learnt from this mistake and improved week after week in our various matches.

Next year I wish the girls all the best in continu-



ing their skills and getting more goals under their belt to better reflect their

capability. We have worked very hard to master short corners to effectively carry these out. I believe in the girls and that they will be able to combine all their fitness training this year with their stronger skills next year to further improve the team!

Lastly, I want to express a huge thank you to Miss Kerr and Mr Stewart who coach the team, for all their hard work behind the scenes and in giving up their free time to enjoy our hockey and (gossip) sessions!



U16 XI

The 2024/25 season marked an exciting chapter for our newly formed U16 hockey squad, and what a journey it has been! Despite limited fixtures throughout the year, the team showed remarkable growth, resilience, and unity—culminating in a thrilling run to the semi-finals of the U16 High Schools Cup.

In a commanding performance, the team secured a 3-0 victory over Newry High School in the quarter-finals. The match showcased the squad's growing confidence, tactical discipline, and attacking flair. Every player contributed to a well-rounded team effort that left spectators and coaches alike impressed.

The semi-final against Kilkeel High School proved to be a nail-biting encounter. In a game that was tightly contested from start to finish, both sides demonstrated exceptional skill and determination. After a goalless draw

in regular time, the match was decided by penalty run-ins. Although the result didn't go our way, the team's performance was nothing short of outstanding. They played with heart, composure, and a never-give-up attitude that made the school proud.

This season was about more than just results. As a newly assembled team, the players had limited opportunities to play together before the Cup campaign. Yet, they quickly gelled into a cohesive unit, showing maturity beyond their years. Their commitment to training, support for one another, and 100% effort in every match laid the foundation for a successful and promising future.

With this season's experience under their belts, the future looks bright for this talented group. The lessons learned, friendships formed, and memories made will undoubtedly fuel their continued development both on and off the pitch.



A huge thank you to the coaching staff, supporters, and families who cheered the team on every step of the way. We can't wait to see what next season brings!



U14 XI

This year the girls had a very strong team, with many of the players having played up for the U14's last season.

The girls started the season extremely strongly with the Stevenson Bowl. The girls won all their group matches which then allowed them to progress to the Semi Final. The luck of the draw was not on our side here as we were drawn against Lurgan Junior High School; our toughest opposition thus far in the season and who we had only narrowly beaten 1-0 in the group stages. The girls worked hard in the match but could not get their rhythm going and were

unfortunate to lose 2-0 in a closely contested match. Disappointing for the girls but we moved towards the cup where we were determined to make our mark. After beating Ballyclare 1-0 we faced a tough Victoria side, once again the girls worked tirelessly but Victoria played some excellent hockey to win 2-0. That led the girls to the Junior Shield where we played Grosvenor. The girls were determined to let all their setbacks go and comfortably won this match to put them through to the semi final. In the semi final they played Sullivan Upper. In a nail biting match the Cookstown girls held on to a

1-0 lead for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the match. In the dying seconds a controversial decision was made which led to a shot corner which allowed Sullivan to equalise. With emotions high after this call, the girls had to endure the dreaded runs in. Once again these girls were not given the award they so deserved and were beaten on run ins.

The girls should take pride in the way they conducted themselves, and the commitment and dedication they have shown all season. Although the results did not go in our favour in the finals, the girls remained unbeaten in every

other match they played this year. As a result of this they reclaimed their west of ulster league title. Well done to the girls and we wish you all the best for your continued hockey with the seniors.



U13 XI

The U13's started the season with plans for the cup run next year so it has definitely been a year of building and developing. The girls had a good season with many victories in their friendly matches. The west of ulster league was what the girls were aiming for this year. They started sleepily with a draw against Omagh which meant the girls needed to win all their matches

to lift the title. Their match against Raphoe showed an excellent result given some of their players were missing. The girls rose to the occasion and against a very physically strong Raphoe side they won 2-0. The girls then went on to play Foyle, Castlederg and Strabane. In these matches the girls went on a goal spree and lots of goals were scored. This success in achiev-

ing goals meant the girls lifted the west of ulster league winning on goal difference. It has been an exciting season with lots of progress and several girls playing up with the U14's. Some of the girls have also been involved in the storm academy so our playing lots of hockey. The future is looking good for our U14 cup next year.



Year 8 Hockey

This year the Year 8's had less players come out to train, but what we lack in numbers we make up for in determination. The girls represented the school in the West of Ulster League and also in the Henderson Trophy this year.

The girls played most of their league matches after the winter break, in order to have more experience and skill as some were playing up in the older team. This proved effective as the girls claimed the West of Ulster league title with wins over Castlederg, Strabane and Enniskillen.

The Henderson trophy proved to be a more difficult competition as more schools entered this trophy.

The girls were very unlucky to lose to Foyle in the first match but then worked hard to beat Omagh and Castlederg in the next two, leaving them second in the group and making it through to the semi finals. The semi finals proved tougher again as they drew with Omagh, introducing the girls to their first experience of run ins. After a quick tutorial the girls did brilliantly especially Diana in goals and ran

out winners of the semifinal, which put them into the final against Foye, who had beaten them 1-0 in the group stages. Cookstown had warmed up by now but despite many chances they just could not find the net. Once again the dreaded run ins loomed, but the girls were confident and showed their determination by converting the run ins and Diana once again saving the oppositions. Henderson Trophy winners for the third year running well done girls.



Hockey & Netball Awards Dinner



Club Player of the Year



Emily Charles Memorial Trophy



Most Enthusiastic



Hockey Leavers



Netball leavers



Most Improved



Players Player



Special Awards

NETBALL - Senior



This year, the Senior squad faced many challenging opponents in the NI Senior League A Group 2 Blitz competition, as well as in the NI Senior Shield and Bowl competitions. We came up against familiar teams like Lumen Christi and Thornhill, fully aware of the



challenges they would bring to the court. From the first quarter, we knew we had to work hard and maintain that intensity throughout each match. Despite the strength of our opponents, we finished 4th and progressed into Section 4 of the Blitz.

In Round 2 of the Blitz, we encountered new opponents such as St Paul's Bessbrook, where the unpredictability of the match kept us on our toes. We also faced strong, familiar sides like Methody and Regent, where staying calm and playing to our strengths was key. After a series of tough, hard-fought matches, we again finished 4th, bringing our NI League season to a close.

Next up was the NI Shield, where we met a familiar Antrim Grammar side. Having come close to beating them

in previous years, we knew we had a real chance. Despite our excellent teamwork and skill, Antrim took the win, and we moved into the NI Bowl. Determined to make it to the final, we faced Carrick Academy next. Our hard work and dedication paid off with key turnovers and goals, securing a win and bringing us one step closer



er to the final.

With several teams withdrawing from the competition, nerves began to rise. Soon, we found out we had reached the final for the second year in a row. It was an unexpected but exciting moment, and we knew we had to show up in style—thanks to J&K Coaches for sponsoring our tops!

This year's final brought a new opponent: Portadown College. With no prior experience against them, the match could have gone either way. As the whistle blew, nerves were high. By the second quarter, we had settled and were ready to show what we were made of. Despite a rocky start and Portadown gaining an early lead, we fought hard to close the gap. The entire team gave it their all, but time ran out and Portadown took the win. There were tears—especially from the leavers—but we walked away proud, silver medals in hand, and of course, celebrated with a well-earned stop at McDonald's.

But the season wasn't over just yet—the annual Boys vs.



Girls match was still to come. The boys came out strong, confident, and very well-dressed in their kits. After a few laughs, we knew it was time to show them what we were made of. Despite some last-minute rule changes (courtesy of the boys), things didn't go their way. We played with determination, skill, and strength, ending our netball careers at CHS with one final victory and our dignity intact.

My netball career at CHS has been nothing but a roller coaster, throughout the 7 years playing I have experi-

enced losses, wins and a lot of laughs along the way. I have gained so many friendships and have shared a lot of emotions with the girls. The 7 years of netball at CHS will truly be missed. And to Mrs Cheevers (the most important member of the squad), we would like the thank you for your amazing support on and off the court as well as the cratic you bring to the squad. We would also like to thank you for the dedication throughout the years whether it has been in training every week where we are always improving our skills and match play, the ef-



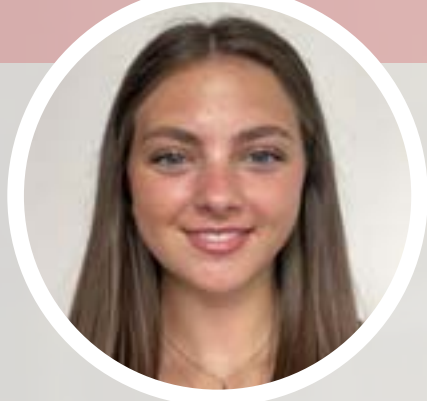
fort you put in for a final days with tops, banners, goody bags and of course the stop to McDonalds. Your support, dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated by any of the senior girls. As we

venture into our new chapter of our netball career, we will truly miss our netball mum.

Katy Hutchison (Captain)



Senior Pen Portraits



Katy Hutchison - Captain

Katy has been at the Centre—literally and figuratively—of our school's netball team since her very first year. Playing in the Centre position, she's been the engine of the team, always on the move, always giving 100%. Her determination and fearless attitude on the court have made her a player everyone looks up to. Over the years, Katy's dedication to netball has never gone unnoticed. She's trained hard, played harder, and this year, all that effort paid off when she was named Senior Netball Captain. As a leader, she's been extremely encouraging to her teammates, leading by example, and giving it her all in both attack and defence. Katy's work rate is unmatched, and her presence on the court will be seriously missed next season – especially her encouraging trademark call: "Up and in!" to our shooters.



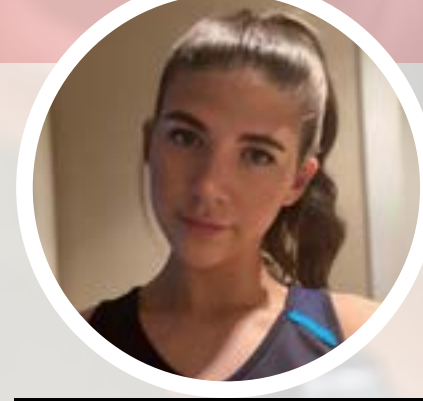
Rachel Farr - Vice Captain

Rachel, our ever-smiling Wing Attack and Vice-Captain, may be one of the smallest on the team, but she's got one of the biggest hearts. Known for wearing her emotions on her sleeve, Rachel is often seen with tears in her eyes—but always paired with a smile. Her passion for the game shines through in every match she plays. On the court, Rachel's sharp feeds into the shooting circle and powerful centre pass drives have been key to the team's success. She reads the game beautifully and always seems to know exactly where her shooters need the ball. As Vice-Captain, Rachel has led with warmth and energy. Her presence will be sorely missed next season—not just for her skills, but for the spirit she brings to every game.



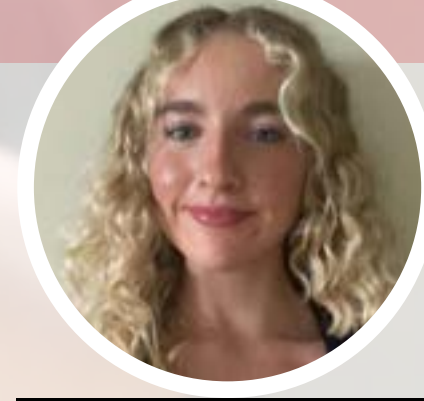
Rachel Brown

Rachel is our pocket rocket who finds her fuel in snacks! Her quick thinking and speed have been a saviour this year, especially when defence is tight. Rachel's acceleration into the centre third is always reliable which has been a game changer. She is quiet but aggressive when she needs to be, allowing her to dominate the circle. With the right snacks to keep her energised she is unstoppable. But will she ever solve the mystery of circle rotation?



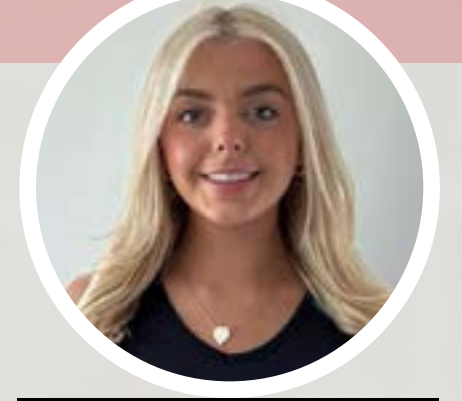
Faye Hunter - GK

Faye's defence has been on point all season, with the skill of timing her movement perfectly to intercept goals. Her talent is aided by her long arms as a secret weapon allowing her to snatch rebounds with ease. Faye can anticipate the play before it unfolds, where her quiet dominance leaves her opponents struggling to get a clean shot. She has been a huge asset to the squad, and I hope she continues her netball career next year.



Anna McKeown –WD/C/WA

Anna is a dedicated member of the squad who always shows 100%. Her ability to inspire and encourage the girls has never failed whether it's on or off the court. Anna's consistency and determination is quiet but her ability to constantly make offers on court is a crucial part of the team. Her dedication and cheerful energy always keeps the squad smiling especially during the dreaded post match photos with her signature head tilt.



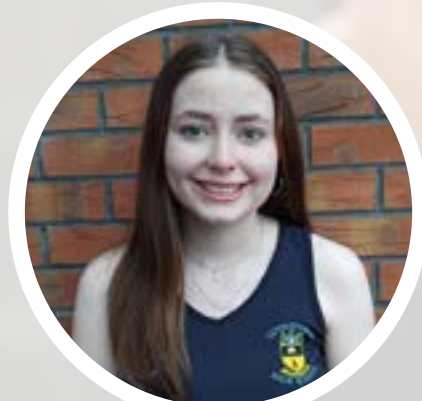
Lois Simpson – GA/GS

Lois proves to be effective as a shooter with her precise aim to score goals. She has inspired the whole squad continuously this year and gave us a giggle while supporting poor Sinead. Lois always arrives in style with perfect nails to flick the ball into the net. Under all her glamour she knows how to add to the scoreboard while looking iconic.



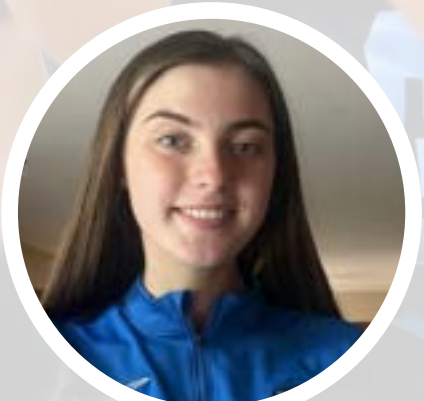
Sophie Dornan – GD

Sophie is always the hardest worker on court with her sharp ability to read the game and time her interceptions perfectly. She is our silent guardian with the only calm head on the court allowing her quiet confidence to unsettle her opponents. Sophie's effectiveness lies in her action always providing a huge impact within the squad.



Leah Caskey – WD

Leah is the heartbeat of the team, and some would say she is a ray of sunshine. Her encouragement and radiating positivity never fails to cheer the squad up. Leah's enthusiasm is unstoppable, but her dodgy ankle may threaten her relentless drive. Although Leah refuses to let it slow her down as determination has allowed her to make exceptional offers. Leah is always there for the girls with a grin and a fighting spirit that never fades.



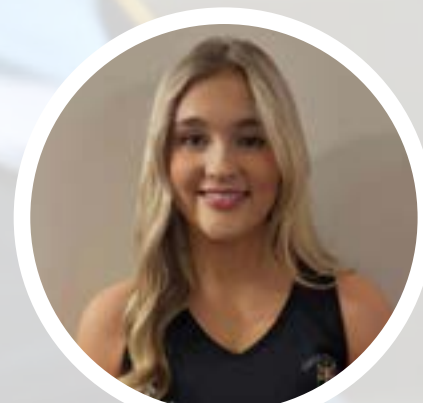
Abi Espie GK

Abi is our bundle of energy on court where she continuously throws herself into every interception. Her boundless energy comes with a touch of ditzyness but she always gives the squad a laugh when she forgets her kit for training or leaves her water bottle behind. Abi's unwavering passion and motivation always shines through, but when it counts, she's always there to protect the post. Her ability to jump for every rebound always leaves the shooters on their toes.



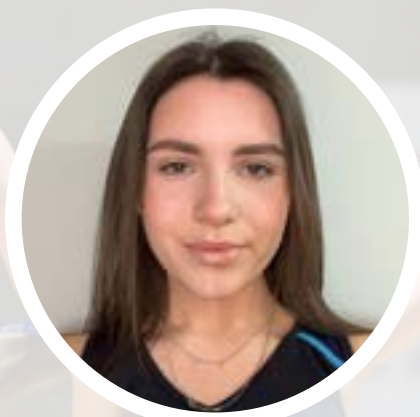
Rebecca Bell – WD/GD

Rebecca plays anywhere in defence where she is stuck to the hip off her opponents. She chases down her attackers to get to the ball first never giving them a chance. Even though she leaves training early she makes sure to always make an impact. Rebecca is always ready to step up in defence and her resilience is what fuels her to never make it easy for her opponents.



Leah Glendinning – GS

Leah always brings a huge wave of positivity on and off court. Sometimes her enthusiasm gets the better off her and she becomes the only goal shooter to offer for a centre pass. Although Leah forgets where she is meant to be she always gives the squad a laugh. Leah's occasional wonders prove how much determination she has, but she always makes sure to be in the right place at the right time.



Ella Halliday – GS

Ella is our silent shooter who is completely unfazed by the pressure of the match. In the rush of the game, she often hesitates with what foot she landed on, nevertheless her precise aim always ends up in a goal. Her opponents often try to rattle her, but Ella has perfected the skill off shooting under pressure. She has held the squad up this year with her ability to never miss a shot. I hope she continues her netball journey next year.



Katie Ferguson – WA

Katie is definitely the most polite player in the squad whether it's during high pressure matches or training. Most of her defender's tower over her trying to break her rhythm, but Katie quietly adjusts and never retaliates. It doesn't matter if we win or lose, Katie will always have a smile on her face remaining dedicated and ready to work harder the next time.



NETBALL - Junior



Northern Ireland League Blitz & Shield

The Junior Netball team had a season full of growth, grit, and great competition, taking part in both the Northern Ireland League Blitz and the Northern Ireland Shield.

League Blitz Competition

The team faced a series of challenging matches against some of the top schools in Northern Ireland:

- Lumen Christi College
- Loreto Grammar School, Omagh
- Thornhill College
- St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore

Each match presented a tough challenge, with all opposing teams showcasing high skill levels and strong tactical play. Despite the intensity of the competition, our team held their own and showed great resilience and improvement with every game. They finished 5th overall, earning a spot in the Section 5 Play-offs—a fantastic achievement that reflects their hard work and determination.

Northern Ireland Shield

The Shield competition brought more exciting moments for the Junior Netball team:

Round 1 Victory

The team delivered a confident and composed performance to defeat Down High School. Their excellent coordination, sharp passing, and solid defensive play were key to securing the win.

Round 2

In a closely contested match, the team was narrowly defeated by Loreto Omagh—a side that went on to win the entire competition. Despite the loss, the girls showed great spirit and determination, never giving up.

Despite not winning all of our matches, I have really enjoyed leading the team this year. It's been a privilege to play alongside such a dedicated group of players. I would like to sincerely thank Mrs. Cheevers for all her hard work, encouragement, and commitment to the team throughout the season. Her support has made a huge difference. I'm proud of what we've achieved together and I look forward to the season ahead.

Rebekah Walker

NETBALL - Inter A



Intermediate A Squad Netball Report

The Intermediate A team had a competitive and spirited season this year, showcasing determination and teamwork throughout.

We participated in the Northern Ireland League Blitz Competition, which featured Blitz Days against four strong teams: Lumen Christi, Loreto Omagh, Thornhill, and St Joseph's Donaghmore. Despite our tireless efforts and commitment, we finished in fifth place and progressed to the Section 5 playoffs. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts, we were unable to take part in the next Blitz Day.

In addition, we competed in the NI Shield and Bowl Competition. The team's hard work paid off in the first round with a well-earned victory over St Louise's Belfast. In the following round, we faced St

Joseph's Donaghmore once again. Although we delivered an impressive performance and made them fight for every point, we were narrowly defeated and exited the competition.

On behalf of the entire team, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Mrs. Cheevers and Mrs. Thompson. Their dedication, time, and encouragement make our training sessions possible and enjoyable. No matter the out-

come of the season, we always have an amazing time, and we are truly grateful for their support.

Emma Reed (Captain)



NETBALL - Inter B

Intermediate Year 11 Netball Squad

This year has been an exciting and rewarding one for our school's Intermediate Year 11 netball team. We represented our school in the Tyrone and Fermanagh Cup Blitz, a highlight in our sporting calendar.

From weekly training sessions to fierce competition on the court, our team showed great determination, skill, and teamwork every step of the way.

The season kicked off with the Cup Blitz hosted at St. Patrick's Academy in Dungannon, where we competed in the tournament involving seven strong teams. The standard was high, and each match pushed us to raise our game. Through excellent communication, sharp shooting, and strong defensive play, we earned a 3rd place finish, securing our spot in the Cup Finals.

The Cup Finals were held at Drumglass High School, bringing together the top teams from both the Dungannon and Fermanagh area play-offs. With talent and determination on full display, our team gave it their all and held their own against



some of the best in the region, ultimately finishing in 5th place overall. This is a proud achievement that reflects our hard work and growth throughout the season.

Looking back, this year's netball journey has been one of dedication, sportsmanship, and steady improvement. From the first whistle to the final match, our girls demonstrated resilience and a posi-

tive spirit, laying the groundwork for even greater success in the seasons to come.

Miah Donnelly (Inter Year 11 Captain)



NETBALL - Minor

Year 9 Netball 2024/2025

Year 9 netball has had a fun year of training and matches. Dedicated girls have faithfully turned up to practice every Monday, ready to get stuck into drills. Over the year we have enhanced our skills and practiced playing as a team which helped us in the NI league.

On the first blitz day we played competitive matches against Mount Lourdes, Antrim Grammar and St Jo-

seph's Donaghmore, with our team coming in 4th place. These were all tough teams and we displayed some great play during the section 4 play-offs.

On the second blitz day we achieved 5th place. Despite our lack of wins, every player put their best foot forward and we look towards greater success in the future. Anna Wilson was player of the match for the first blitz day

and Amy Elliot and myself were players of the match for the second.

Throughout the year the team has displayed potential and made progress and we owe our thanks to Mrs Cheevers for all her help and encouragement.

We can't wait to come back next year for the opportunity to thrive in a sport we love!

Evie McIlmoyle (Captain)



NETBALL - Year 8



strength and potential of our Year 8 netball teams. We are excited to see these talented players in action again next season.

A special thanks to Emma Reed and Freya Mills for their assistance with coaching this year. Their support has been instrumental in our success.

Year 8 Blitz

This season, we had 35 Year 8 girls participating in netball, with 28 girls still going strong at the end of the season. Training sessions were held every Wednesday, with invaluable assistance from Intermediate players Emma Reed and Freya Mills. NI Year 8 Blitz at Sperrin Integrated College

This year, we entered two teams in the NI Year 8 Blitz at Sperrin Integrated College. Team 1 had an impressive run,

losing only 2 matches during the tournament. Team 2 also performed well, losing only 3 matches overall.

Tyrone and Fermanagh Cup Our girls were also entered into the newly formed Tyrone and Fermanagh Cup competition. We could only enter one team for this blitz day. Our girls faced strong opposition from St Patrick's Academy Dungannon, St Patrick's College Dungannon, Fivemiletown, and Drumglass. After some fantastic matches, we

emerged victorious in the tournament and progressed into the cup finals.

In the cup finals, we competed against Mount Lourdes, St Cieran's, St Fanchea's, Sacred Heart Omagh, and Enniskillen Royal Gram-

mar. Although we didn't win any silverware, all the girls put in a great performance and showed tremendous effort.

Friendly Blitz vs Sperrin

We managed to fit in another friendly blitz days against Sperrin Integrated College. This provided the opportunity for all three of our Year 8 teams to compete in competitive matches and give all girls the games experience. We competed against two teams from Sperrin's and a great day was had by all. Our Year 8 Red Team won all their matches, securing victory in the blitz. This season has demonstrated the



RUGBY

It's been a great year of rugby at Cookstown High School, with plenty of enthusiasm, hard work, and memorable moments both on and off the pitch. A dedicated group of Year 8 and Year 9 boys committed themselves to weekly training sessions every Wednesday after school, showing up in all weather conditions to develop their skills and grow as a team. From tackling drills to passing accuracy and game awareness, the boys made great strides throughout the season, always bringing energy and a positive attitude to each session.

Adding to the year's highlights, 40 pupils had the opportunity to travel to Kingspan Stadium on Friday 18th October to watch Ulster take on the Ospreys. The pupils were treated to a thrilling, high-scoring match, with Ulster securing a 36-12 victory. To make the evening even more special, some lucky students got to meet Ulster's beloved mascot, Sparky! It was a brilliant experience that inspired our young players and added an extra spark to an already successful rugby year.

A big thanks must be given to Miss Hanna, Mr McAdam, and Mr Dean Talbot (Rainey RFC). Their guidance, encouragement, and expertise played a huge role in the squad's development, and we're incredibly grateful for the time and effort they invested. With a strong foundation now in place, the team is looking forward to stepping into competitive fixtures next season with confidence and excitement.

Mr N Hastings



TABLE TENNIS

share tips, and enjoy the social side of the sport. It was great to see such a range of year groups coming together, from newcomers giving table tennis a go for the first time, to more experienced players honing their technique.

A major highlight of the year was the club's participation in both a regional and a national competition. These events gave pupils the chance to put their training into practice and challenge themselves against players from other schools—some of whom had international experience, even representing Ireland! Our students showed excellent sportsmanship and determination, with many receiving Awards of Commendation for their effort and team spirit.

We were also fortunate to welcome Vladimir from Table Tennis Ulster for a one-off coaching session. His expert advice helped our players improve their techniques and inspired them to keep progressing. We hope to build on this experience in the future with more coaching opportunities.

It's been especially rewarding to see the progress made by our Year 9 students, with a full year of practice clearly paying off. Our new Year 8



This year has been a fantastic one for the CHS Table Tennis Club, which has continued to grow in both numbers and enthusiasm. Meeting during lunchtimes once a fortnight—and sometimes even more often—the club attracted around 17 committed pupils from Year 8 to Year 14, creating a lively and inclusive space for players of all levels.



The club continues to be a popular lunch-time activity, with students gathering regularly to practise their skills,



members have also shown great promise, displaying impressive potential early on. Both Coach Vladimir and competition umpires commented on the emerging talent among our younger players—highlighting some exciting prospects for the future of the club.

It was equally as encouraging to see several Sixth Form students getting involved in the club and even competing in the regional tournaments—giving them a



chance to represent CHS one last time and create fond memories before they leave school.

Well done to all members for a brilliant year—whether you took home a medal or simply improved your game, you've all achieved something to be proud of!



Head Boy Report

Louis Donnelly

After 7 incredible years in Cookstown, I am so honoured to write this extract from Liverpool, studying an Actuarial Mathematics degree- something that would never have been possible without the incredible support of this institution. I am privileged to have attended a school with such a rich history, a strong community and a place so rife with opportunity. In May of 2024, the newly voted in senior prefects sat their interviews with senior leadership to determine who would become our head boy and head girl. It was the greatest privilege of my school career to have been selected for this role, but equally I knew that this great honour came with a lot of responsibility and an incredibly busy year, but we were driven to represent CHS to the absolute best of our ability.

We were thrown straight into our roles, with sports day, a social, P6 taster days, and the Year 8 house competition all taking place within our first few weeks. As exams finished up and summer began, we looked forward to a busy one- with formal preparations beginning almost immediately after our last maths paper, we deliberated venues, costs, bus companies, and everything in between before ultimately booking Corick House Hotel and Spa at the end of June. Various stages of planning continued over summer until the end of August rolled around, and it was time to get back at it!

Our school year began with us all assisting with the Year 8 induction day, a day which

felt surreal, as we reflected on how we remembered the Senior Prefects when we were in that position. We were then formally introduced to the school by Miss Evans during our first assembly duty- something we came to love.

As sixth form is such a crucial element of senior school, we, alongside Mrs Allen and Mrs Johnston made the decision to host a breaktime with donuts to welcome the new lower sixth students into the Common Room, a place which can seem quite daunting at first. At our annual prize day, we welcomed Mr Peps McCrea to Coolnafranky to speak about his work within education. The day consisted of a lunch with Mr McCrea, staff members, and the senior prefect team, followed by the prize giving, during which Mr McCrea delivered an inspiring (and hilarious!) speech about his work and time at CHS. Sophie and I were then tasked with delivering thanks to Mr McCrea and presenting him with a token of our appreciation from the school.

Within our first few weeks, the school played host to Mr Paul Givan (Education Minister for Northern Ireland), Sophie and I had the privilege of attending a meeting with the minister, in which we had a thought-provoking conversation about how we felt the education system in our country is flawed.

The school production, since its much-anticipated return, has become a huge event on the school calendar. For me, this meant singing and

dancing, but we were all involved in some way in what was a brilliant success. I thank everyone who attended the shows, the full cast, crew, orchestra and our director Conor O'Brien for making it so special, it is a memory we will cherish forever.

Towards the end of the school year, we participated in the remembrance service, and the annual school carol service, which we both deemed to be a great honour. During the festive period, we enjoyed decorating the common room and Christmas jumper day to get in the spirit of Christmas!

Another element of our roles of senior prefectship was our fortnightly meetings with SLT over coffee and scones. This was a valuable time where we exchanged ideas, discussed upcoming duties and the relationship between the pupil body and school leadership, and the scones were a bonus too!

Quickly after the Christmas break, we embarked on our tour of local primary schools, alongside Miss Evans and Mr McGeown, ahead of our open day in mid-January- when we welcomed hundreds of prospective students to CHS to see what their life here could be like, it was a pleasure to meet them all and to advertise this unbelievable school.

Then in February, came probably the biggest event of the year, in the form of the ETI visit. We invited 6 inspectors into CHS to experience its excellence, after welcoming them to Cookstown, we brought the



inspectors between their observation classes, and hosted a meeting with them, as did the student council- on which we all sat during Year 14, which was a great pleasure.

Towards the second half of the year, nothing slowed down! We made a start on the formal video, as well as the yearbook- which contained photos and messages from all members of our year, and our teachers as well as lots of photos from our 7 years, it immortalised our year group and will be a great reminder of our time together in years to come.

In between this, we welcomed the Presbyterian Moderator to CHS, and we led a tour of him and his team around campus, after Miss Evans and Mrs Lynne Dripps held a meeting with him in Coolnafranky House.

We kept going, and next came the spring concert, which Sophie and I co-hosted. A night showcasing the incredible musical talent of the High School, which rounded up with an ABBA tribute act by myself, Sarah, Sophie, Sophia, Anna, and Theo- which was a major musical success, if I do say so myself!

As the end of the year approached, we began into organising ourselves for all our leaver's activities. We put the final touches to our formal video, in the form of a Boys

Vs Girls netball match, put in the order for leavers fleeces, and alongside Mrs Johnston organised for our leavers' day and trip to the beach. Then we headed off to sit our A-Level exams!

We returned to school to wrap up the final of formal planning. During this time, Deputy Sam Purvis and Mr Haycock organised the annual staff vs student's charity football match, which was great fun. Then, towards the end of June, after the new head boy and head girl had been appointed, we completed our final in school event, the masked singer! Groups (and solos) of

teachers graced the stage of the Miller Hall in full attire behind masks, safe to say, some of them chose the right career with teaching...

Finally, the big day came on the 27th of June, where over 200 pupils and staff headed to Corick House Hotel to celebrate the past year. It was a night filled with great fun, great food and lots of (questionable) dancing. I'd like to thank the staff at Corick and the senior prefect team for all their help in organising what was such a successful event. 7 years at Cookstown High School were the most enlightening, fun, and joyful years of

my life so far, and I feel incredibly honoured to have been bestowed with this role during my final year of study, and I count it as a privilege to be able to contribute back to the school which has given us so much.

Alongside the incredible team of 24/25 prefects, who I cannot thank enough for their absolutely outstanding work ethic the entire year, we completed so much. The whole year, and the school in its entirety, will be memories I cherish for my whole life. To serve alongside the SLT team, the school council, and the senior students was a pleasure,

and we've certainly all made friends for life. A direct thanks to Mrs Johnston and Miss Evans for their unwavering dedication to our year group and through our whole time at CHS, as well as every single one of our teachers, you have been outstanding to us all.

I wish every success to the newly appointed senior prefects; Matt, Lois, James, James, Leah, and Katie- you will have a busy year, but at the end it will become so unbelievably worth it, and you'll do an incredible job. If I had any advice, it would be to implement a rigid kitchen rota, ASAP!

Head Girl Report

Sophie Dornan

It is hard to believe how quickly these last 7 years have gone. Being Head Girl of Cookstown High School has been such a privilege and a huge learning experience. From scones at SLT meetings to talking with the education minister, it has been a whirlwind of events, challenges and special moments that I'll never forget.

One of the biggest events this year was the school inspection. While there was a buzz of nervous energy around school, it was a great chance to show off all the amazing things happening in CHS everyday. From the hard work in classrooms to the support offered through our pastoral care teams to achievement in sports.

Sports has been a big part of my time at CHS, being part of

both the hockey and netball teams. Getting to the finals in both sports two years in a row was such an achievement and a real testament to the determination and teamwork of everyone involved. Win or lose, I couldn't be prouder of the effort we put in and memories we made along the way. Another experience I really enjoyed was helping with the school productions of The Sound of Music and Oliver. Watching all different groups of students mix together to bring the show to life was a truly special experience.

Working with Louis came so naturally and I could not have wished for a better Head Boy to work alongside (although sitting the same A-Levels, sitting beside each other in every class, having the same study periods and essentially spending every minute at

school with each other was a true test of patience). A huge factor in our success as senior prefects came down to how organised Louis was and I think the deputies will agree that without him we would have been slightly lost.

I want to say thank you to our deputies, Leah, Anna, Theo and Sam who helped with every decision and made life so much easier, even if Sam was just there to avoid study. Thank you to all the incredible teachers for their support over the last 7 years and for going above and beyond to help in any way they could. You were truly some of my best memories of CHS.

I want to especially thank Mrs Johnston. I think all the leavers of 2025 can confirm she is the backbone of sixth form and she certainly runs the



show. I truly do not know how she manages to keep over 100 16-18 years olds in line while helping with university applications, interviews, teaching, coaching and playing hockey. So again, thank you Mrs Johnston!

Lastly, a massive congratulations to the senior prefect team for 2025/2026. Head Boy Matt, Head Girl Lois and their deputies, James, James, Katie and Leah. You will all be amazing!

IN MEMORY OF MR WILFRID YOUNG, OBE, MA, DIP ED

HEADMASTER OF COOKSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL (1971–1990)



We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Mr Wilfrid Young, OBE, former Headmaster of Cookstown High School, who led the school with distinction from 1971 until his retirement in 1990. Mr Young, who would have celebrated his 98th birthday this year, leaves behind a legacy of scholarship, service, and steadfast dedication to education.

An erudite and gracious gentleman, Mr Young was known for his warmth, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to the development of young people. His love for the local area was matched only by his deep affection for Cookstown High School, where he played a pivotal role in shaping the school's direction during a period of significant change.

During his 19-year tenure, Mr Young oversaw the amalgamation of the former Grammar and Secondary Schools, steered a major building and renovation programme, and introduced the then-new GCSE system. Under his leadership, the school evolved to meet the needs of a changing educational landscape, all while retaining a strong academic foundation and community spirit.

Mr Young's scholarship was remarkable. A passionate classicist, he had a lifelong love of Latin, Greek, classical literature, and ancient history. His guiding philosophy might well be captured by the phrase "ancora imparo" – "I am still learning." Even in later years, he remained intellectually curious and engaged with the world around him.

Educated at Foyle College, Londonderry (1941–1946), Mr Young went on to study at Magee University College, Trinity College Dublin, and Queen's University Belfast. At Trinity, he graduated with Honours in English and French and earned multiple prizes and scholarships throughout his academic career. He served as Assistant Lecturer in English at Trinity College and later as Lecturer at Magee College, before being appointed Head of English at Rainey Endowed School, Magherafelt, in 1954.

In 1971, Mr Young became Headmaster of Cookstown High School. He was a diligent and expert educator, respected for his high expectations, deep subject knowledge, and diplomatic

leadership. Known for his quiet dignity and approachable nature, he was a trusted mentor to both students and staff alike, always ready to listen, advise, and encourage.

In recognition of his outstanding service to education, Mr Young was awarded the OBE in 1987 – an honour he received with characteristic humility.

Beyond his educational contributions, Mr Young was an active and faithful member of the Church of Ireland. He served on both the Armagh Synod and the General Synod, and in 2006, he was honoured with the title of Lay Canon at the Cathedral: a fitting tribute to his commitment to faith and community.

Mr Young was a loyal and beloved figure in the life of the school – not only a Headmaster, but a mentor, advocate, and friend to many. His impact on the lives of pupils and colleagues alike is enduring, and his memory will be cherished by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Mr Young's family. Cookstown High School has lost a true scholar and gentleman. We are grateful for the years he devoted to our school and proud to honour his memory.

