

# CROSSHILL NEWS



**Crosshill  
School**

Prepare and flourish

**WINTER 2025**

## A FESTIVE WELCOME

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of a wonderful term at Crosshill School, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the many achievements and experiences that have made this season so positive for our pupils, staff and wider community.

This term marked the launch of our new Creative Curriculum across the Explore and Discover pathways. Pupils have been engaging deeply with key texts, supported by staff who have undertaken training in the effective use of drama techniques. This has enabled us to strengthen speaking, listening and engagement skills across the school, further enriching our curriculum offer and enhancing the learning experience for all pupils in those pathways.

We also successfully completed our first full term with our new school kitchen. A heartfelt thank you goes to Colleen and the catering team for designing and delivering such a fantastic menu for both pupils and staff. The meals have been thoroughly enjoyed and have contributed greatly to the atmosphere of warmth and wellbeing around school.

We were delighted to welcome a number of visitors this term, including representatives from the police service and an Olympian, who inspired our pupils with messages of hard work, dedication and resilience. Our pupils took part in a circuit challenge during the visit, raising funds and demonstrating great enthusiasm and team spirit.

Educational trips, including pantomime outings for several year groups, brought a great deal of joy and excitement, creating wonderful memories to end the year. Our winter fair was also a huge success and I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all who attended, donated, supported and of course, to our amazing staff for their commitment in making the event so special.

Thank you to our whole school community for your continued support. I wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable winter break and I look forward to another successful term ahead.

Best wishes  
**Nicola Pemberton**  
Headteacher





## POST 16 UPDATE

This term has been incredibly busy for Post 16, so much so we could have filled the entire newsletter! Here's a snapshot of what we've been up to.

### LEARNING IMPORTANT LIFE SKILLS

This term our Whitehall class have been attending Height Nook to practise their independent living skills. They have been learning how to sort and wash clothes and the different methods of drying them. These are all important skills that will help them to live more independently.

### LITTER PICKING

As part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award, Post 16 pupils have been volunteering litter picking in their local community. Through rain or shine they have been cleaning up the car parks and surrounding areas of Shadsworth Business Estate.

### GYM SESSIONS

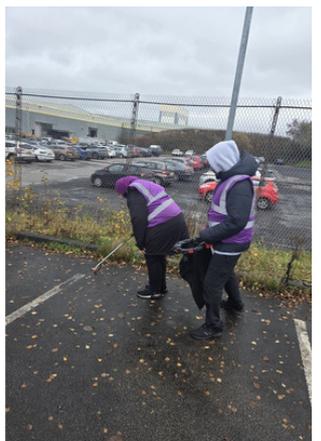
To fulfil another component of their Duke of Edinburgh Award, Blackburn with Darwen Refresh have been helping our pupils to learn about keeping healthy. As part of this work pupils have been attending a weekly gym session to learn a new exercise skill, complete a warm up and learn how to use all the machines safely.

### CHRISTMAS MARKETS

The students worked so hard on their Christmas market stall at Blackburn Market. They sold a range of gifts, which they had handmade in class. Raising £90 in total, all proceeds go towards their Post 16 enterprise fund, which helps to fund activities in the community. Thanks to everyone who bought from us.

### FOOD SHOPPING

This term Windsor class has had the responsibility of going shopping each week to buy all the groceries needed for Post 16 and Height Nook. Pupils have used their writing and reading skills to create shopping lists and independent living skills to use the self-checkout to scan items and pay by card. The pupils have visited a range of supermarkets to become familiar with shopping in different places. They have gained confidence each week, now needing little or no help to navigate the shelves and find all the products we need.





## OH NO IT ISN'T....OH YES IT IS!

Year 9 Turton class had the opportunity to visit the theatre to watch Snow White, and it was a thrilling and fantastic experience. For many pupils, it was their first time seeing a pantomime and it certainly didn't disappoint. The performance was lively and colourful, with impressive costumes, catchy musical numbers and clever lighting that brought the story to life.

The actors kept everyone entertained with humour, audience participation and classic panto moments - booing the villain, cheering the heroes and joining in with the jokes and songs. The children were ecstatic throughout, fully engaged and laughing from start to finish. They were especially captivated by the special effects, dramatic entrances and interactive scenes/songs that had them cheering and jumping with excitement. What a wonderful outing!



## COMMS BOARDS

Communication is one of the biggest barriers and that's why it is crucial that we try and make things as accessible as possible for our pupils.

We have created various communication boards across school to help break down those barriers for our learners. They help support and enhance communication skills, foster independence and confidence, reduce frustration and make learning and social environments more inclusive for our pupils.



## CINEMA TRIP

Witton and Nichols classes had a brilliant morning at Vue Blackburn Cinema to watch Sonic 3, thanks to the free tickets we got through Into Film's 'Festival of Film'. The kids were buzzing from the moment we set off and the excitement only grew once Sonic hit the screen. It was one of those trips where everyone was relaxed, happy and fully enjoying themselves. Our pupils were a real credit to the school on their first trip out in the community — they behaved brilliantly and made us all proud. A big well done year 7!





## MENTAL HEALTH DAY

During the first half of the autumn term, our whole school took part in a drop-down day focused on mental health and regulation. All pupils from primary through to post-16 explored what helps them to feel calm, supported and positive.

Throughout the day, pupils took part in a variety of activities suited to their needs and interests, such as exploring emotions, sensory regulation, mindfulness, yoga, art therapy, forest school and baking.

Our year 11 Brockholes pupils also shared thoughtful presentations of their personalised 'Feel Good Plans', showcasing the strategies that help them to manage their wellbeing. Some classes were also supported by external services, including Kooth in key stage 4 and a specialist sensory session in primary.

The day provided a meaningful and uplifting start to the academic year, helping pupils to build positive routines, develop self-awareness and establish a strong foundation for their wellbeing as they move through the year.



## PRIMARY PUPILS GET CREATIVE

Pupils in primary have had a fantastic start to the term, settling confidently into their new routines and classrooms. They have been particularly enjoying their creative lessons, where they have been exploring the beautiful book 'When I Was a Child' by Andy Stanton, as well as art, drama, music, sensory and imaginative activities.

There has been lots of exciting learning happening across the phase:

- Clitheroe class are loving their independent living sessions, exploring food in a range of sensory and practical ways.
- Clarence class in their English sessions have begun the Core Word Programme, engaging with core vocabulary through hands-on, motivating – and often wonderfully messy – activities.
- Clifton class have been learning about numbers to three in maths, taking part in fun, interactive tasks to build early number understanding.

It has been a joyful term filled with curiosity, creativity and lots of smiles!





## ARTS UPDATE

In art, pupils have explored the formal elements of art, laying a strong foundation for their creative skills. Their learning extended beyond the classroom with an exciting trip to the Blackburn Textile Biennial, where they identified and analysed art from around the world.

Our music department hit a high note when pupils successfully completed the challenging "Finish This" project from the English National Opera (ENO), resulting in the composition of fantastic pieces of original music! To wrap up the term on a festive note, our talented choir also brought holiday cheer by carol singing at both Blackburn Market and the school's winter fair.

To celebrate their achievements and solidify their skills and knowledge in drama and performing arts, pupils ended the term with a thrilling trip to the Empire Theatre to see the festive pantomime!



## SENSORY CIRCUITS ARE A HUGE HIT

Earlier this term we introduced sensory circuits at school for pupils to access each morning.

A sensory circuit is a short sequence of physical activities designed to help individuals, particularly children, regulate their alertness and prepare for learning or other tasks. It consists of three distinct sections:

- Alerting activities to energise the brain
- Organising activities to improve focus and motor skills
- Calming activities to help the individual relax and feel settled

Feedback so far has been amazing, with students really enjoying it and teachers noticing a difference in learning time. Miss Waddicor said: "I see a great difference in the children when they complete sensory circuits. It's become part of their routine and they all benefit from it for different reasons, such as readiness for learning, following simple instructions, gross motor skills etc. All the children like going too."

Miss Fiskin also added: "Students come back regulated, ready for learning and feeling like the body break is useful for them first thing in the morning."





## POLICE PAY YEAR 10 A VISIT!

During the second half of the autumn term, our year 10 Explore classes – Sunnyhurst and Ribble – welcomed a visit from our local Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) as part of their independent living unit: Help in the Community.

The PCSOs talked to pupils about their role in keeping the community safe and explained their role as 'safer strangers' who we can approach if we need help when out and about. Pupils asked thoughtful questions, explored some of the equipment and even tried on some uniform.

It was an engaging and valuable session, helping students to understand who they can turn to for support in the community. Thank you so much to Lancashire Constabulary for the visit.



## CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

We have had such a wonderful December, packed with lots of festive activities for our pupils to enjoy. There have been pantomime visits, lots of crafty time in school making festive creations, plus lots more.

We held our annual Christmas fair earlier on in the month and it was a resounding success with £1300 raised for our enrichment fund, which goes towards funding activities for our pupils.

Thank you so much to all of the staff and pupils who helped to make everything for the event, plus all those who came along to support us, it was packed and everyone had a ball. We must also say thank you to the local businesses who donated prizes for our raffle and tombola, your generosity does not go unnoticed.

Our Christmas jumper day tied in with our Christmas lunch this year and was definitely our best lunch yet! Cooked fresh in our new kitchen, pupils and staff feasted on roast dinners with all the trimmings. A big thank you to our kitchen staff for such a wonderful spread, we feel very fortunate to have such a talented team serving us healthy, nutritious food each day.

