

Thornhill Together



Thornhill
Community
Academy

A School • A Family • A Community

Record Numbers Choose Thornhill

Our largest new group of Year 7 students have been settling in well and getting to grips with Academy life.

Student Award Success

Happy reunions and an inspiring speech from Assistant Headteacher, Mr Burton, at Thornhill Community Academy's GCSE Presentation Evening.

50th Celebrated in Style

Birthdays are always special, but this year is extra special for our Academy as we reach the historic milestone of 50 years.



HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME



Welcome to our special 50th Anniversary edition of the Academy magazine Thornhill Together, which is again packed with a wealth of stories and images of the wonderful work being undertaken by everyone in the Academy community, including curriculum-based activities, charity work, trips, visits and residential, and competitions. I never fail to be staggered by the volume of extra-curricular opportunities available to students in the Academy, and the sheer numbers of those getting involved to make it an exciting and vibrant place to work and play.

The run-up to the Christmas break was, as ever, hectic, but the benefits of getting involved with a wide range of events, both in and out of school, are far-reaching and made all the effort worthwhile.

I hope you enjoy reading about our exploits in the following pages and hope you managed to recharge your batteries over the winter break and are enjoying a happy and healthy 2015 so far.

Jonny Mitchell
Headteacher



**This is our 50th
Anniversary,
1960's style and
souvenir edition of
Thornhill Together**

CONISBROUGH CONQUEST

Year 11 students recently enjoyed a historical enrichment trip to the picturesque Conisbrough Castle, in support of their History GCSE studies, giving them an insight into medieval life.

Built by Lord Hamelin, during the 12th century, once sheltering royalty, Conisbrough Castle sits proudly atop Norman earthworks and is a design unique to Britain. Direct contact with such a grand and ancient monument offers much more than mere exposure to textbooks.

The Year 11 historians were inspired by a hands-on discovery which brought to life the story of Conisbrough's past. They learnt what it would have been like to live and work there during the medieval period.

The trip was organised as part of students' studies, in order to assist with their History GCSE course, which requires them to visit a historical site and assess its features.

Miss Price who organised the trip told us: "The trip to the castle was a fantastic opportunity for students to better understand what life in the medieval period was like. Being able to explore the castle for themselves will help when starting their coursework as they will be fully prepared to consider questions about the site."



New Head Boy and Head Girl

We are delighted to announce the appointment of our Student Leadership Team for the new academic year.

After a gruelling application and interview process our new Senior Prefects have been selected. Congratulations to Zakir Khan, Head Boy, Bethan Peace, Head Girl and Deputies: Aaron Crowe, Sabhaan Githroo, Anita Bayraktar and Haalah Islam.

The Student Leaders will be supported by a team of 40 Prefects, who are all excellent role models, committed and enthusiastic about their new appointments. Being part of the Student Leadership Team will enable the Prefects to gain valuable leadership, communication and team building skills for the future.

Zakir Khan told us: "I am honoured to be chosen as Head Boy. I am determined to make the Academy a better place."



Bethan Peace said: "I am really honoured to be chosen as Head Girl. I will use my role in a positive way to contribute towards Academy life."

The Student Leader's contribution to Academy life is much appreciated and helps ensure our ongoing success.

HIGH PROFILE SPEAKERS INSPIRE STUDENTS

The Northern Editor of the Guardian, Helen Pidd, and Customer Services Director for First Direct Bank, Karen Walker, visited the Academy last term, offering expert industry insights.

Addressing an audience of Year 10 and Year 8 students studying English, Ms Pidd, who has been working at the Guardian for 10 years, delivered an inspirational career talk, giving students a first-hand, 'real taste' of what it is like to be a journalist and to work within the media. Helen later turned the library into a newsroom as part of a journalism master-class, teaching students the key skills needed to make their way in the industry.

Year 8 student, Jack Chambers, told us: "I really enjoyed learning about the reality of being a journalist and I thought the different aspects of the workshop were really interesting and enjoyable."

Helen's visit provided a fantastic opportunity for students to hear from an industry expert, who has reported on key events, as well as interviewed many leading and interesting figures from across the world.

As part of the Academy's INSPIRE programme, the targeted support provision for high



achievers, Customer Services Director for First Direct Bank, Karen Walker, offered financial career advice to gifted and talented students.

Our aspiring bankers were engaged whilst listening to Karen's career journey to the top and took note of the qualities First Direct look for when selecting their candidates for interview.

Students quizzed her on her role and how to follow in her footsteps in the banking industry.



ARMISTICE DAY

The Academy marked Armistice Day with a special wreath-laying and minute's silence.

The eleventh day of November is known as Armistice Day marking the end of the First World (or Great) War 1914-1918. On the 11th November over 750 Academy students joined millions across the world in observing a minute's silence as a sign of respect at 11am. As a further mark of remembrance, the Academy Head Boy and Head Girl, along with a group of history students, laid a

wreath of poppies in the Academy's Peace Garden. Poppies were also sold to staff and students throughout November to raise money for the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal.

Director of Humanities and History teacher Mrs Hattersley told us: "It is important that 100 years on from this conflict we keep the memory of fallen soldiers alive by teaching future generations about this event. During the minute's silence students were reminded of the sacrifice made by soldiers and civilians in the Great War and conflicts since this."

STUDENTS SEE LIFE BEHIND THE LENS!

Budding young journalists, Year 11 students Jessica Bailey and Bethan Parry, dropped into the ITV News studios to see what goes on behind the scenes in a busy newsroom and to find out about working in the media.

During their hands-on visit, Bethan and Jessica observed how a live show is put together, tried their talents at presenting the weather, directed a news item, and mastered the art of editing shots. The students met with presenters, correspondents and producers, with no areas out of bounds and no question too small, giving them a thorough understanding of the industry.

Jessica told us: "It was really exciting to meet the presenters and to spend time sampling an industry that I would really love to work in. I feel really lucky to have been given such an amazing



opportunity, my goal to work in television has been strengthened by this experience."

Career insights such as this cannot be achieved in the classroom. Speaking with people who work within an industry on a daily basis and listening to what they have to say about their work and career gives students a better understanding of that particular industry, helping them to determine whether it is a career path for them.

RECORD BREAKING NUMBERS CHOOSE THORNHILL COMMUNITY ACADEMY

With Thornhill Community Academy's record breaking number of new starters to date, the new group of Year 7 students have been settling well into Academy life, making lots of new friends, meeting their new teachers and getting to grips with their new exciting subjects.

At the Academy we have been working hard to ensure the transition from primary to secondary school is as smooth as possible. Our new group of Year 7 students ended their first two weeks with a team building session packed with fun activities. The settling in session was aimed at boosting interaction and developing team skills, encouraging students to foster new relationships and gel with their peers. As a small school community, we pride ourselves on knowing each child as an individual; we nurture and support them to achieve their full potential and to become a well-rounded, active member of the Academy. Our dedicated non-teaching Head of Year 7, Mrs Marsden, guides the new Year 7 group in their first year at the Academy.

Mrs Marsden Head of Year 7: "Part of my role is to make sure our new Year 7s transition to Thornhill Community Academy is as smooth as possible, ensuring every single student progresses academically with the highest levels of achievement, whilst feeling supported and cared for, and most importantly, if they experience any problems, they know exactly where help is available."

With our new year group the largest we have seen in the Academy's history, more parents than ever are recognising the high standards, dedicated teaching staff and the outstanding work of the Academy and are making Thornhill Community Academy their school of first choice.

SHARING SPORTS SKILLS!

Y9 and Y10 Sports Leaders helped front a Y5 and Y6 inter-primary school indoor athletics event. Primary students from Thornhill J&I, Overthorpe Academy and Headfield Junior School were invited to use the Academy's excellent sports facilities and learn new sporting techniques and skills, providing an opportunity to increase their participation in physical activity.



The Academy's Sports Leaders are excellent role models to the younger students. This activity proved the ideal opportunity to not only extend the knowledge and skills students developed in PE lessons, but build on their coaching and leadership abilities, through sharing these skills with the younger children.

The PE department at the Academy welcome opportunities such as this, recognising the importance of developing key physical skills from a young age. Not only does it help with the younger students' physical development, it also helps with transition to secondary school, helping them make new friends and develop links with other stakeholders in the community.

Mick Troop, the Local School Games Organiser, commented on the Academy's Sports Leaders: "Thanks again for last night and organising Leaders for us, all students did exceptionally well in all areas."

The students involved were selected to be the Academy's Sports Leaders as they are highly dependable, supportive and dedicated members of the school community.



CELEBRATING STUDENT SUCCESSES

Happy reunions and an inspiring speech from Assistant Headteacher, Mr Burton, at our GCSE Presentation Evening.

Former Year 11 students of Thornhill Community Academy congregated at the prestigious Dewsbury Town Hall to celebrate their academic success. GCSE certificates were presented and awards were given for greatest effort and greatest achievement to students who shone in each subject area. Parents, governors and staff all gathered on this formal occasion to congratulate students who are now continuing their studies in other academic establishments.

The event was a superb showcase of the Academy's talent and a fitting celebration of the achievements of the hardworking students in their final exams.

Two former students who excelled in their academic performance received special recognition and superior awards. Victoria Conn was presented with the James Kilkenny Award for her exceptional progress and achievement, and the Wheelwright Old Boys' Prize was awarded to Ammarah Shaikh, for her outstanding academic achievement across the board.

Statistics confirm that 97.5 % of our 2014 leavers continued with their academic journey at higher education institutions. We are really proud of this fantastic result and wish all former students the very best in their future studies and careers.

PROVISION PUPILS GO DOWN THE PIT



On 21st November students from the Academy's Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Provision visited the National Coal Mining Museum.

The purpose of the enrichment experience was to enhance teamwork and communication skills of students in the Provision across all year groups. The trip enabled students to learn first-hand about the

mining industry and the lifestyle of miners, providing a creative stimulus and a context for learning.

During the visit, students took part in an educational workshop, where they discovered how coal is made and created their own fossil souvenir to take home. Kitted out with torches and hard hats, students later travelled in a cage lift, below

ground into the mines, where they witnessed authentic pit workings.

Mrs Summersall-Frith, Teacher in the ASD Provision, told us: "It was great seeing all the students supporting each other, whilst coping with a new sensory experience and having the opportunity to have their questions answered by someone who had first-hand experience of mining life."

READ ABOUT OUR ENRICHMENTS!

We have recently produced a brochure detailing all the Period 6 classes, support clinics, clubs and activities that are available to students. To view our brochure please visit our website www.thornhillcommunityacademy.co.uk

RAISING CASH OVER A CUPPA!



Our staff room was taken over and used as part of the Macmillan's World's Biggest Coffee Morning on 26th September.

Academy members went into overdrive raising £200 in just 15 minutes for the

charity by transforming the staff room into a homemade cake and coffee shop.

Mrs Marsden, organiser of the event told us: "Staff in the Academy are extremely busy and often work straight through break times, however everyone made a huge effort to head for the staff room and enjoy a coffee, cake and chat, even if it was for only 15 minutes! It was a wonderful atmosphere and raised a fabulous £200!"

A CHRISTMAS WISH

In the run up to Christmas staff and students made a 'Wish Upon a Star' to help raise money for Winston's Wish, a charity for bereaved children. For a donation of £1, staff and students made a wish or wrote a special message, remembering someone dear to them who has been or is a 'star'. Their star was then placed upon a tree at the Academy.

Mr Mitchell told us: "We have huge admiration for Winston's Wish; they do such a tremendous job. By making a special wish at the tree, our Academy community will be



helping the charity to support even more bereaved children and make a positive and life-changing difference to them."

A special thank you to Year 8 student, Luke Roberts, and his Mum, for their kind contributions of Christmas cards and cakes for the event.

Jeans for Genes



Students and staff donated £1 to swap their usual smart school skirts and trousers for dress down denim in support of Jeans for Genes Day, on the 19th September, raising over a fantastic £500.

Headteacher Mr Mitchell told us: "We are delighted to support Jeans for Genes Day. Students and staff love joining together as a school community to raise funds for such deserving charities, and we know every penny will make a difference to those less fortunate than ourselves. We encourage others to join the campaign next year and don their denim!"

All money raised will go towards assisting the 1 in 25 children who are born with a genetic disorder, providing them with the extra care and support that will transform their lives.

Pounds for Pudsey!

Our students and staff organised and took part in a whole host of events in order to raise money for Children In Need.



Various activities ran throughout the national fundraising day including 'Name the giant Pudsey bear', a sponsored silence, Pudsey cake sale and the much enjoyed 'splat the teacher', which saw students seek revenge on their teachers for all their homework!

The Academy raised over £150 which will go towards funding many projects throughout UK for disadvantaged children and young people.

Jolly jumpers

Staff at the Academy joined hundreds up and down the UK and took part in Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day 2014. The aim of the day is to help make the world better with seasonal sweaters, and was the perfect way to have some end-of-term festive fun, while raising money to help save children's lives.

The Academy raised a fantastic amount which will go towards helping the most vulnerable children in the world.



50TH CELEBRATIONS



Birthdays are always special, but this year is extra special for Thornhill Community Academy, as it reaches the historic milestone of 50 years.

The Academy originally opened as 'Thornhill Secondary School' on 25th November 1964. Some 50 years on, and now known as Thornhill Community Academy, the school has been on a monumental journey growing into an Academy of excellence, where students of all abilities excel through the dedication and outstanding work of staff and students.

Headteacher, Mr Mitchell, said: "Thornhill Community Academy has changed over the years, our students and teachers have played a vital role in shaping it into what it is today. We hope to involve a great deal of them, past and present, in our celebrations, and to be part of helping us to build and develop Thornhill Community Academy for future generations."

FORMER STUDENT RETURNS AS TEACHER

When students leave high school they rarely return, however, only seven years after Chloe Holdgate left Thornhill Community Academy, she returned this year as a teacher.

Chloe joined the Academy's English Department as teacher of KS3 and KS4 English after completing her PGCE in English, at the University of York.

Chloe told us: "I'm absolutely thrilled to be back at Thornhill. I enjoyed my time here as a student and aim to be just as successful as a member of staff! I am working with many teachers who taught me. It is great to see the school from a teacher's perspective. When you are at school you don't realise or appreciate the amount of work your teachers put into lessons."



Twenty-two-year-old Chloe attended the Academy in 2008 leaving with a set of excellent exam results, enabling her to secure a place at the University of Sheffield to study English Literature. Chloe later went on to train for her PGCE at the University of York in 2011, with an ambition of becoming a teacher, and graduated one year later. She returned to the Academy as a Newly Qualified English Teacher in September 2014.

This year we are celebrating 50 years of Educating Excellence, and during this time the Academy has produced many outstanding students throughout its 50 year history - Chloe being just one example of this.

Countless former students who attended the school appreciated the warmth and closeness of the community spirit throughout the Academy. Many grew so attached they have returned to pursue a career in the place where their journey began.

FIFTY FAB PRIZES FOR FIFTY YEARS!

As part of the golden celebrations our troop of prefects were challenged to gain 50 prizes for a special 50th raffle, with kind donations being made from a whole host of local businesses. Prizes included boxing gloves signed by Amir Khan, an iPod, a MAC Makeover and photo shoot, restaurant vouchers, beauty and hair vouchers, afternoon tea, experience days, bluetooth speakers and headphones and many more! Thank you to everyone who made such generous donations.

A YEAR OF 50TH FESTIVITIES

To mark the golden anniversary the Academy is hoping to host numerous exciting projects throughout its 50th year. All proceeds made from the 50th events will go towards funds for a memorial bench for our Academy Peace Garden. This will mark as a place of remembrance for all who have passed through the Academy in the past 50 years.

INSPIRATIONAL ALUMNI

The Academy has produced many outstanding students throughout its 50 year history, who, since leaving the Academy, have gone on to enjoy very successful careers. To name but a few of those careers, they include sports stars, dentists, accountants, barristers and performing arts stars. We will be inviting these former students to share their journeys with our current student body, as part of the Academy's INSPIRE Guest Speaker programme, which encourages top achievers to aim high.



BIRTHDAY TREAT FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Residents at Field Head Care Home enjoyed a sweet surprise with a visit from Academy students. A team of Year 10 prefects brought smiles to their faces, spreading 50th birthday cheer with birthday buns and refreshments.

The students entertained the group with the highlights of the Academy's birthday celebrations and asked them about their memories of the school over the past 50 years.

Katie, activities coordinator at the home, said: "When they came in the residents' faces lit up. The students interacted with the residents and asked them lots of questions. To see them get on so well with our residents and staff brings a real sense of community spirit."



OUR GOLDEN GALA

To commemorate the milestone, on 25th November we hosted a great golden party full of fun activities which ran throughout the school day. Kicking off the celebrations was a form 1960s quiz and departments got creative by running lessons from the 1960s era. Technology had a bakeathon, baking 50th

birthday cupcakes, which were sold to staff and students, and the PE department laid on playground games from the 60s which included skipping, jacks, hopscotch and cat's cradle, giving students a real taste of the fun break times enjoyed throughout the 1960s.



AN 'EDUCATING' JOURNEY

Thornhill Community Academy has enjoyed several moments in the limelight since appearing in the Channel 4 documentary 'Educating Yorkshire' in 2013. The Academy's television debut has opened up many new and exciting opportunities for the Academy and its students, including visits from inspirational guest speakers, exciting trips, enrichment opportunities plus new first class facilities for the school. One pinnacle moment was the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Academy choir to open the ITV National Television Awards. They also had the privilege of performing live with Take That singer Gary Barlow on the northern leg of his world tour.

Viewers of Educating Yorkshire were captivated by inspirational lessons and heart-warming stories, providing an enchanting insight into teaching and learning in a secondary school, which summed up everyday life at Thornhill Community Academy.

Over the last few years in particular the Academy has grown into an institute of educational excellence giving all students the opportunities and skills to succeed. We look forward to educating Yorkshire for the next 50 years.

THORNHILL GOES GREEN



Carly Webster from leading UK environmental charity, Sustrans, spent a week at the Academy encouraging students to make healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys to school, giving them the skills and confidence to travel under their own steam.

Making cycling fun, Carly gave students the chance to partake in a Virtual Velodrome lap on roller-bikes during their PE lessons and at break and lunchtime. Competition between the sporty students was fierce as the speediest students in each year group were awarded a £5 gift voucher.

Sustrans donated 30 cycle helmets, lights, bike locks, puncture repair kits, bags and other prizes to students who are partaking in new cycling, walking, bus and park and stride initiatives, in the hope to increase levels of active travel to school.

Sustrans have also funded a new lockable cycle shelter for the Academy which will be erected in February. The Academy is looking to start a cycle club and begin work towards achieving the Sustrans Bronze Award, whilst at the same time alleviating some of the congestion in the local community.

HELPING LITTLE GREEN FINGERS



Year 7 and Year 8 Gardening Leaders are taking part in a breaking barriers local community initiative called 'Growing Together'. The community programme focuses on gardening, involving our Year 7 and Year 8 students, alongside Year 4 pupils from local primary schools, Headfield Junior School, Overthorpe Academy and Thornhill J & I and their parents, teachers and other community members.

Over the year-long project, the Academy's Gardening Leaders will be helping younger pupils to brush up on their gardening skills, learn the art of growing fruit, vegetables and herbs, learn where their food comes from and experience the world beyond the classroom in their gardening clubs.

Equipped with their new found gardening skills, the primary pupils are invited to the

Academy to work with our own gardening club and assist with the Peace Garden Project.

Carol Walker, Community and Partnerships Leader at the Academy commented: "It is wonderful to see so many students from different schools working together towards a common goal. Our students have been excellent role models and have given up so much of their free time to support the project. Well done to all Gardening Leaders."

The programme supports the Academy's extensive transition programme, enabling students from different primary schools with diverse backgrounds to meet and make friends ahead of their move to secondary school. The gardening initiative provides the ideal platform for this as it is a key community hub and social space.

Keeping primary school students safe

Thornhill Community Academy worked with West Yorkshire Police in order to educate local primary school children of the dangers of Halloween and Bonfire Night.

Everyone loves the excitement of Guy Fawkes Night, but whether you're heading off to a huge extravaganza or a small local gathering, it has to be

safety first when it comes to fireworks and fires.

The Academy's Police Officer, PC Jude Ford, visited schools across Kirklees, including Westmoor Primary, Overthorpe Academy, Paradise Primary and Thornhill J & I, to explain the dangers of playing with fireworks and how to be careful while still having fun.

PC Jude Ford said: "It is important to keep talks like this light so children get the message and remember it without being too frightened, but also to emphasize the seriousness of the injuries that can be caused by fireworks. It is great to engage with the local community and educate younger members of the public about how to stay safe on November 5th."



The firework safety awareness assemblies support Thornhill Community Academy's commitment to sharing expertise, best practice and developing partnerships with local primary schools.

ARTISTIC FOR ADVENT



Students got crafty for Christmas, supporting a local Art Exhibition at Thornhill Parish Church.

Students across all year groups were involved in creating a scrap book of collages to demonstrate their own interpretation of 'The Real Meaning of Christmas'.

Joining forces with other local schools, Overthorpe Academy and Thornhill J & I, the Academy's students helped produce an exhibition, showcasing a fresh look at Christmas through the eyes of the young.

The exhibition was open to members of the local community to visit and enjoy as part of the programme of events running on the Church's Advent Open Weekend.

GETTING THE WORKFORCE OF DEWSBURY FIRST AID READY



Following the success of our 'Learn to be a Lifesaver' campaign, we are pleased to be able to offer Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) Level 2 Emergency First Aid at Work training.

Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (1981) require employers to provide adequate personnel, to enable first aid to be administered to employees if they are injured or become ill at work. These regulations apply to ALL workplaces including those with five or fewer employees and to the self-employed.

To support the workforce of Dewsbury, the one day (6 hour) training course is being

offered at a hugely discounted rate of £35. For regulatory purposes, candidates who successfully complete the HABC Level 2 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work will be awarded with an accredited certificate and be fully qualified to act as a designated first aider in the workplace.

The course will be run by our accredited First Aid Trainer and Academy Welfare Officer, Amanda Griffiths, and is a Level 2 qualification which is valid for three years.

To book on to a course or for more information please contact the Academy.

Fair Finance For All

Thornhill Community Academy is supporting the local community by hosting the Fair Finance For All, Borough & Parish Community Credit Union drop in advice service, running every Thursday 2.45pm-4pm at the Academy.

Spreading Christmas Cheer



Thornhill Community Academy teamed up with local primary school, Overthorpe Academy, to take part in Dewsbury Rotary Club's Christmas Shoebox Appeal, helping spread a little bit of Christmas cheer across the world to those children who really need it.

The Academy's Senior Prefects joined forces with Overthorpe Academy's School Council, working together to both produce the Christmas gifts and to fundraise the cash to ship them, ensuring that they reach a deserving child at Christmas. The boxes were then collected by the Dewsbury Rotary club, who praised students on their efforts.

Prefect Leader Miss McGee told us: "Our Prefects help organise many charity events and fundraising activities. It is key to learn the importance of leadership from a young age. Our Academy prefects are great role models for the younger students and help them develop their organisational skills."

For the young and the old, this appeal provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their role as responsible, global citizens and realise that they really can make a positive difference to the lives of others across the world.



BONJOUR, GUTEN TAG, HO LA

The European Day of Languages is held every year on September 26th to celebrate the importance of languages across Europe, and what fun can be had learning them.



At the Academy we had a variety of activities for everyone to participate in including caption competitions, music challenges and culture quizzes. All staff wore stickers saying 'hello' in one of a number of languages as a way of greeting students whilst the Humanities Department were able to exhibit their impressive display showing how many countries we, as a school, have visited around the world. The Academy was also in pastry heaven, offering croissants for breakfast and pains au chocolat at break time!

Students and staff were highly motivated and keen to get involved with all of the activities, using their recently acquired or, in some cases, largely forgotten linguistic skills!

Mr Pitcher, Head of Languages, told us: "It was great to hear so many languages of the world being used by so many people throughout the day. By the time it got to the last lesson of the day, I was greeted by students in about eight different languages! Bravo et merci!"

What a great success! We now look forward to next year's event to extend our skills and ideas.

Gold Award for Cultural Diversity

Thornhill Community Academy has been awarded the prestigious Specialist Schools and Academies Trust Cultural Diversity Quality Standard (CDQS) Gold Award, for its work in supporting cultural diversity and equality across the curriculum and in all areas of school life.

The coveted Gold Award recognises and celebrates the excellent work carried out to ensure a culturally inclusive environment within the Academy. This is promoted through achievement, curriculum, ethos, parental and community involvement, and staff and governor training.

Headteacher Mr Mitchell commented: "This award recognises the Academy's many achievements in ensuring all students have access to a high-quality education and countless enrichment opportunities – it is the highest award we were able to achieve as a first-time applicant, and so we are all absolutely thrilled to have been rated so highly by the SSAT. Congratulations to everyone involved in the gruelling assessment process and for the work they have invested!"

The Gold Award is a fantastic accolade which not only reflects the exceptional work of the Academy but also highlights our commitment to ensuring that all of our students are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

READING LEADERS



As part of the Academy's commitment to ensuring that all students become competent readers and supporting our drive to raise achievement and attainment, thirteen Year 10 Prefects are training to become Reading Leaders.

The prefects are undergoing a training course with training provider Reading Matters, to equip them with the skills to deliver one-to-one tutoring and support to Year 7 and 8 students who struggle with literacy. The new reading initiative has a dual impact, as the mentoring role will give the Year 10 Reading Leaders invaluable skills and add value to their CV and higher education applications, while reader tutees will improve

their basic reading and comprehension skills. The programme also aids the transition process, enabling younger students to form positive relationships with older students.

Head of English Mrs Sinclair told us: "This scheme is important for both the prefects and the younger students. It gives both sides the chance to develop their literacy skills at all levels. It also arms the prefects with skills needed for their future. It is clear that the students taking part, both KS4 and KS3, enjoyed the time working together."

At the Academy we are working hard to promote reading as a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone.

STUDENT REPORTER



Year 7 History students were tasked to write an article for our Academy magazine describing what life was like for children during the Industrial Revolution.

This was only a classroom activity, however Year 7 student, Halimah Asmal, produced an outstanding and entertaining piece of work which deserved a place in our magazine.

The life of children during the Industrial Revolution by Halimah Asmal, Year 7.

Well, do you ever think about how life during the Industrial Revolution was for children? Well, prepare to be showered with knowledge!

Firstly, back then you wouldn't be sitting and watching TV in the evenings and weekends. You would be working a

dangerous job as a chimney sweeper or in a factory. If you were poor you would not go to school. You might think, Fantastic! Trust me it would not be, life was dangerous and the average life expectancy in Leeds in 1830 was 18 years old!

Although life has improved for most of us today, other children still wake up to a life of poverty. Next time your mum asks you to do something, bear in mind that people do these chores all day for a tiny amount of money and you are actually very fortunate.



CONCENTRaTING ON caReeRS

On the 13th November we hosted our first Careers Fair. Supporting the Academy's commitment to prepare students for their future, the event welcomed over 40 top businesses, employers, training providers and educational establishments into the Academy. Attendees included The University of Huddersfield, Radio Leeds, Topshop, Thomas Cook, Mercedes, IBM and the British Army.

Drawing in hundreds of students and parents, the exciting and inspirational event proved a great opportunity for both to meet many local and national employers and talk to them about careers and roles they can offer. Colleges and universities presented a selection of courses and offered help with the application process. A variety of training providers showcased how young people can earn and learn at the same time. Students enjoyed talking to real people, doing real jobs and finding out about training and job opportunities.

Leader of careers at the Academy, Linda Garside, told us: "It is so important to inspire our students through interactive workshop events, informing them of the range of education, training and employment opportunities in the area."

Looking to the future and ensuring all students are well supported with their career choices when leaving the Academy is of great importance. The Careers Fair provided a platform for students to discover more about

the different career paths open to them and gave access to relevant information needed to make well informed decisions about their next step.

A huge thank you to all the companies who came and made the event such a success.

Thornhill Community Academy earns prestigious award in careers education

Thornhill Community Academy has been awarded The C&K Careers Quality Standard, highlighting the outstanding work undertaken by the Academy, showcasing best practice in careers. This is a nationally recognised award given to schools and recognises the long term commitment to providing the very highest quality careers education, advice and guidance (CEIAG). The award also demonstrates the Academy's continued commitment to meeting Ofsted and national standards.

Mr Mitchell, Headteacher, commented: "I am delighted that the Academy's continued dedication and commitment to providing such a personalised and comprehensive careers programme for all students has been recognised with this award, well done to staff for all their hard work."

Thornhill takes it away for Number Day!

On 5th December the Academy joined schools across the UK to take part in NSPCC's fundraising maths bonanza.



The aim of NSPCC's Number Day is to make maths fun and instigate a positive 'can do' attitude towards the subject, whilst raising funds and awareness of the NSPCC's work. Students were encouraged to take part in a range of sponsored mathematical activities, which ran across all departments throughout the day.

Maths Teacher Miss Arden told us: "Number Day is a great way to help a very worthy charity and encourage our students' enjoyment of Maths."

At the Academy we are very proud to be able to use our knowledge of numeracy and numeracy skills to make a difference to children's lives that need it most.

Boosting Success

This term we are launching Tute, an online teaching and learning resource that allows students to access one-to-one tuition online. Tute will provide students with catch up support, GCSE revision help and booster classes to maximise their attainment. To find out more about Tute please visit our website and find an information page under our 'Parents' section.

SCIENCE HOMEWORK HYPE



This year the science department has launched the 'Takeaway Homework' scheme for students in Key Stage 3. The new scheme, which aims to encourage enthusiasm for home-learning, allows students to choose from a variety of differentiated homework

tasks, all of which are linked to the Academy's reward policy.

Science teacher, Miss Ross who teaches two Year 7 groups told us: "I can't believe how popular homework has become and how enthused the students have all been!"

One of the most popular homework tasks Year 7 students have been participating in, is to produce a cake showcasing a science theory they have recently learnt. The science department has been inundated with top quality and highly imaginative cakes, turning it into The Great Thornhill Bake Off!

Thank you to all our KS3 scientists for the tremendous effort being put into homework tasks so far this year.



Bully Busters

Twenty one of our Year 10 students have been trained to become Peer Mentors. It is recognised that students often find it easier to speak to other students rather than an adult. Our Peer Mentors will be available for all students and can be approached about bullying worries or any other problem they may have. Students have been fully trained to deal with any issue sensitively, to look out for signs of bullying and to know when it is essential to refer problems to an adult.

Sports Council

The Academy has formed a Sports Council this term, which will be run by students from across the school, providing an important link between staff and students. Part of their role is to promote extra-curricular activities to the different year groups and to organise and develop opportunities for students by working alongside the PE department and other Academy staff.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Natalie Crowther left Thornhill Community Academy in 2008 and has gone on to secure a successful career in performing arts.

Natalie has been performing for nearly 15 years and in that time, as well as studying at Thornhill Community Academy, has completed qualifications for dance teaching in modern, tap and ballet at Preston Dance College. In 2010 Natalie went on to achieve a coveted scholarship at the prestigious Italia Conti in London, where she completed a 3 year performing arts course, graduating in 2013. Whilst in London Natalie performed in the Heineken Rugby Final Closing Ceremony at Twickenham and in a production with the Polka Dot Company as a member of the ensemble in the Aladdin pantomime in Peterborough. She went on to perform in numerous shows at the esteemed Royal Albert Hall, including the Classical Spectacular, Christmas Spectacular and Jingle Belle Christmas show, before embarking on a European tour in 2014 with the musical 'Grease'.

Natalie is set to return to the Academy where her journey began as part of our INPIRE Guest Speaker Programme on 21st January 2015.



Thornhill Community Academy

A School • A Family • A Community

Valley Drive, Thornhill, Dewsbury WF12 0HE

Tel: +44 (0)1924 324890 | Fax: +44 (0)1924 324892

Email: info@thornhillcommunityacademy.co.uk

STUDENT IN THE SPORTING SPOTLIGHT

Name: Charlie Whitlam

Year Group: Y11

CORE ACHIEVEMENTS

Charlie is a sporting star who has accomplished numerous outstanding achievements. Charlie is one of the top players in our Academy's football and badminton teams, helping us to secure top ranking league positions. He is not only a hard working member of the GCSE PE cohort, but he has taken part in Sports Leaders activities; this



has involved umpiring at primary school cricket matches. As a strong distance runner, Charlie also won the Y9 boys 800m race at Sports Day 2014. He is also a keen tennis enthusiast, playing for Thornhill Tennis Club.

Charlie's view: "I really enjoy PE and school sport. The PE Department has helped me to develop myself and my love of many sporting activities. With their support and encouragement I have been able to help encourage others, including primary school students and younger members of my school, to get involved and enjoy sport."

FOOTBALL FOCUS



The Academy has seen some super performances and team successes in football this term.

There have been some great wins, notably the Y7 team who beat Hemsworth Academy 5-1, securing a place in the 5th round of the Inter Schools Cup competition in which they will go head to head with Ossett Academy. Our Y9 team overcame a disappointing start to

the season and went on to beat Minsthorpe School 2-1, demonstrating that hard work and persistence pays off. Well done boys!

Our football teams have witnessed some outstanding performances this half term; Kurt Hodgson Y7 student, has been a shining example of what can be achieved with a positive and hardworking attitude. Kurt has represented the school for Y7, Y8 and Y9 teams, with his most recent performance being a real spectacular highlight. Kurt stepped in to play for the Y9 team at the last minute to boost numbers. Having done so, he went on to win the "Man of the Match" award by producing a classy display of skill, determination and high levels of sportsmanship.

This month sees the start of the district schools' 7-a-side Football Tournaments for all year groups. We are expecting to see the boys deliver some excellent team performances and go far in this competition.

NETBALL NEWS

The Academy's Netball participation has seen a massive uptake since the start of term, with teams from each Year group being entered into the Spen Valley Schools League.

Strong Y9 and Y11 squads have enjoyed victories against Morley Academy, Batley Grammar and BBG Academy earning them a prime position in the league table.

Netball coach Mrs Ryder commented: "I am really pleased with the level of interest in netball this term. It is brilliant to see all the



girls so enthusiastic about coming to training as well as the excitement shown when playing their matches. The Y11 team have won all their games so far this year and I predict we will see a trophy in the school's cabinet before they leave us!"