



NEWPORT NEWS

A weekly update from NGHS

Volume 2 - Issue 20 - Friday 1 March 2019

Head's Lines



Spring has sprung! So proclaimed the news on the BBC this morning. Well, the weather outside is a positive improvement (I might soon stop talking about winter coats!) but I don't think we've seen the end of winter just yet.

In any case, it's warmer in Newport today than it was in Russia over half term. Our inaugural NGHS Russian adventure was truly outstanding. The country is very beautiful and steeped in history which is both varied and fascinating. From the Tsars to the Soviets to Putin, there was something for everyone and even with the somewhat dubious souvenirs which the girls picked up in the flea market for a few roubles (I felt for you if you were the one who received the mug of Putin riding a horse), I am sure that the 40 students who took part in the trip all enjoyed the experience. Almost as much as I did the enforced Cossack dancing! From talking to parents at last night's Y9 Parents Evening, I understand that video has done the rounds! Well, when in Russia....

I trust that you had a restful break over half term. Year 11 and Year 13 are now entering the most important phase of their two year examination courses. It is essential that attendance is high and they are working hard on their examination preparation. With a late Easter, the first half of the summer term is very short, so this half term is the crucial one. After the Y11 and 13 mocks, we are supporting students who need some additional help and encourage you to contact Miss Clarke or Mrs Griffin if there is anything you need to discuss.

You will be aware, I'm sure, of information in the press about a very unpleasant online Momo Challenge. This has not escaped younger students at NGHS who have also been affected. If you would like to read more from a parents' perspective, the NSPCC website has useful information about protecting young people online in general. WhatsApp is a platform which has also recently been affected and we are all reminded that the minimum age for use of this app is now 16. Our own website also has a number of help guides for parents on lots of topics - please feel free to browse our For Parents section.

This week's newsletter is a jam-packed extravaganza covering items before and after the half term break. Please enjoy learning more about NGHS. Also, thank you to those who have contributed to our governors' consultation on the possible expansion of NGHS to four form entry. The closing date is 11 March and more information is on the homepage of our website.

With best wishes for the weekend, **Mr M J Scott**

Assistant Hosts Sought

After Easter we are lucky to have two students from Germany working at NGHS as language assistants. Christine and Chantal, both in their early twenties, are doing a teaching degree at Wuppertal University and will be with us for the whole of the summer term. They are looking for somewhere local to stay, ideally with a family. As well as contributing financially to their stay they would be happy to help you with chores or babysit for you. It would also be an ideal opportunity for your child/your children to improve her/their German speaking skills. If you can help, please email headteacher@nghs.org.uk

YOUTH SPEAKS COMPETITION

On Tuesday 12 February, six Year 12s competed in the annual Rotary Club 'Youth Speaks' public speaking competition. NGHS entered two teams this year and students selected thought-provoking topics. The first team of the evening, Ellie W., Ellie H. and Orla O., spoke with authority on the nature of reality, exploring whether or not reality as we know it could be a simulation. The second NGHS group, Mir B., Victoria E. and Lucy D., examined the psychology of friendship in a thoughtful and engaging manner. Both teams approached their topics with maturity and their performances on the evening were excellent. There was a friendly rivalry between the four competing schools on the evening and the presentations from all four schools were excellent. Very well done to all of those involved and thank you to the Rotary Club for organising the competition.

Mr Postle

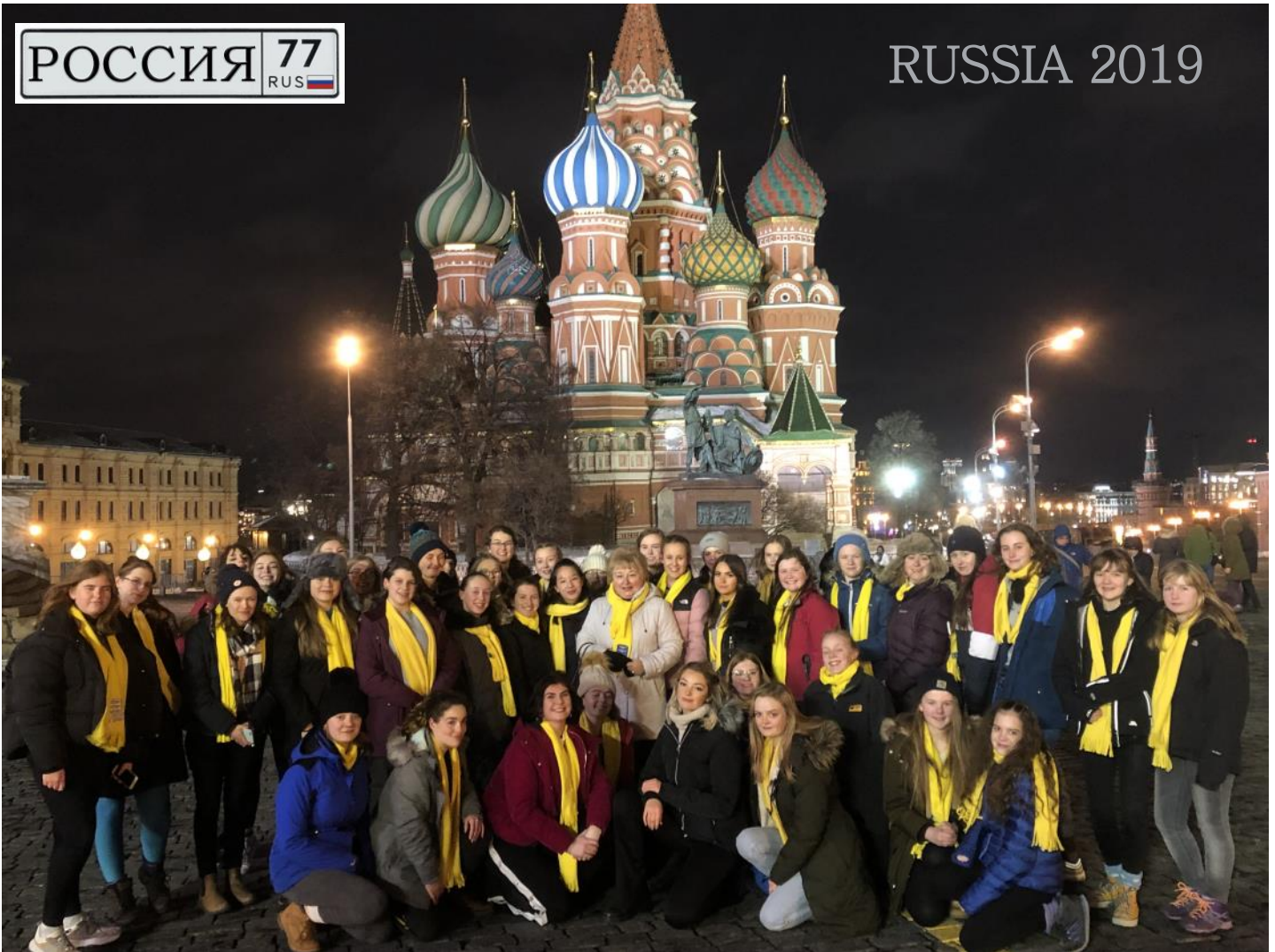


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NGHS students on Red Square with our delightful tour guide Natalia (centre) and our equally delightful yellow scarves

Russia is perhaps one of the most diverse and beautiful countries in the world, however, before travelling there I was unaware of its vast culture and history. The trip was a once in a lifetime opportunity and something I shall never forget.

The first day was a mad rush of travelling with Mr Scott praying we did not miss our connecting flight from Frankfurt to Moscow! We donned our yellow NGHS scarves and departed from school at 5:30 in the morning. We were exhausted by the time we arrived in the Russian capital; however, the food the hotel provided us certainly perked us all up!

The next day was an exploration of the wonderful and beautiful city of Moscow with our tour guide, Natalia, focusing on the area around Red Square. We were lucky enough to see Lenin's embalmed body and get some Instagram-worthy photos in front of St Basil's Cathedral! We then visited the prestigious GUM shopping centre and, despite the -1 degree weather we could not resist buying some ice cream! After that, we went to the Kremlin and saw many sights, including the largest bell in the world and the Dormition Cathedral. We then had a short lunch break and the year 12s and 13s decided to embrace the Russian culture and have a McDonalds! After this, we went on a Metro tour. The ornateness of each station was breath-taking, with marble arches and stained glass windows. It was easy to

forget that these were used for public transport as they looked more like a museum! Following the tour we went to the Gulag museum and it was extremely harrowing to hear the stories of victims of Stalin's regime and how it still affects people today. The highlight of the day, however, came in the evening with the Cossack dancing where we watched and even joined in with traditional Russian dance. This evening also included, arguably, the most memorable sight of the trip as we watched Mr Scott attempt to do Cossack dancing!

The next day was just as jam-packed as the first, with us going to a Russian market and spending far too many roubles as well as visiting Stalin's bunker. We then went for lunch before going on a city tour of Moscow which included Christ the Saviour Cathedral and the Novodevichy Cemetery. We then had traditional Russian food, which included Borscht - beetroot and cabbage soup! After this, we went bowling and my competitive nature came out after coming 5th in my group of 6! Following the games of bowling, we went to Red Square once more which was even more beautiful at night with an ice rink taking centre stage and fairy lights hanging from every building. This was the perfect end to our time in Moscow. We said farewell to Natalia and headed for the over-night train. (continued...)

Lucy D, Year 12

Bowling in Russia was an interesting experience. We were in a lane of four so realistically should have had more bowling time than the other lanes of six. However, due to our inability to bowl without barriers nearly all of our balls ended up in the gutter, thrown at high speeds, obviously. The highlight was definitely when one of us scored fifteen in an entire game. Not sure who was having more fun – us or the teachers playing table football!



After that came another highlight, the overnight train from Moscow to Saint Petersburg. Sleeping on the train in a room of four overnight with our friends was brilliant. Trying to tell each

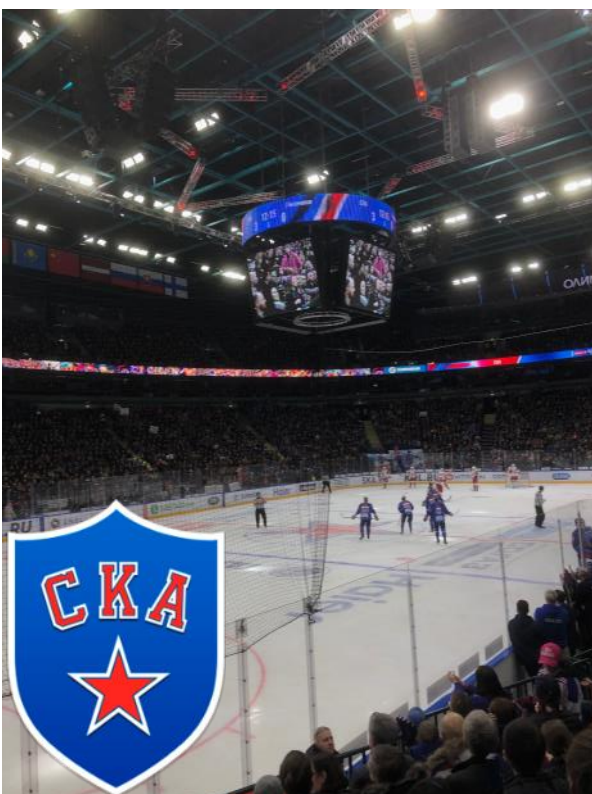
other how to open the ladder to get on the top bunk was an interesting experience –there was some great teamwork! Arriving in the hotel in Saint Petersburg the first noticeable thing was how much more modern this hotel was. The rooms were larger and the light switches were harder to use.

After asking Mrs Griffin, she told us that we had to put a key card in the slot behind the door to get the power working. Before that, none of the light switches were working and we were so confused –I was going to have a shower in the dark. Thankfully, we figured out how it worked.

Overall, Russia was an amazing experience, everything was so beautiful, we learnt so much and made lots of memories with friends.

Tilly H & Emily F (Year 9)

SAINT PETERSBURG



Within minutes of being in the European capital of Russia we immersed ourselves fully into the culture with the St Petersburg guided sightseeing tour. Lead by the enthusiastic Julia, we were able to gain a real insight into the history of St Petersburg in such a short space of time, despite being conned by a man dressed as a cartoon zebra outside the historic Church of the Saviour on Blood. Perhaps, my favourite visit of the trip was to the Political History Museum. The guided tour spanning from Tsarist Russia to present day politics under Putin proved extremely beneficial for my History A-Level and helped me gain another perspective on the progression and development of Russia politically. We then made our way back to our second hotel of the holiday and had some down time to recover from the three days of non-stop walking. It wasn't long until it was time to head back to our beloved driver Alexander who drove us outside the centre of the city to watch the incredible ice hockey match. SKA (the home team) annihilated the opposition with a 4-0 victory and it's fair to say that each and every one of us became fully invested in the match as we clapped and cheered along to the Russian chants that we didn't understand. Tired yet elated, we travelled back to our hotel and settled down ready for our last full day of the trip.

Tuesday consisted of a guided tour of Peter and Pauls fortress, experiencing a real Russia prison and then in the afternoon we embarked on a two-hour tour of the Hermitage museums. Seeing the Winter Palace up close was an unforgettable experience and it was exciting to be able to link events we have learned in lesson with such an iconic landmark. The group was awestruck by the extravagance and elegance of the Russian architecture and we were surprised to see two Da Vinci masterpieces on the tour! After purchasing phones cases and brightly-coloured prints and even making a quick visit to the café we left and made our way to one of the restaurants in town. We enjoyed another three-course meal and reminisced on our amazing trip as the flight home started to get closer. But, we still had plenty of things to pack into our remaining hours in St Petersburg. Later in the evening, we had another guided tour of the city but at night. We took our final group photos lit by the stunning lights left over from Christmas. The final day came around quickly and we headed out for our final visit of the trip- to the incomprehensible Catherine Palace which hosted another enormity of grand rooms and information about the history of the royal family. This concluded our trip in a perfect way as we took every chance to absorb the culture and city one last time. We started our return journey to the UK, sadly leaving Russia behind, arriving at school at midnight with suitcases full of Russian dolls and amber jewellery special to the country. **Ella D, Year 13**

Finally, special thanks to Mrs Seys, Mrs Griffin, Miss Clarke and Mr Scott for giving up half term to accompany the trip.

LOVE WAS IN THE AIR



Our Crafternoon (run by the Health & Wellbeing Student Group) before half term was all about Valentine's Day and students in all years enjoyed coming along to make some valentines cards. Crafternoons are a great way to de-stress, chat to other students and complete a practical challenge.

Frankenstein Interpretations



Last half term all of Year 7 studied Philip Pullman's adaptation of Frankenstein. They have been developing their analytical skills but for the final two weeks they have also had the opportunity to be creative. Firstly, each group had to pitch an idea for a new Act in the play. All of the students were involved and presented their ideas to the class clearly and confidently. In the final week of term, they had the chance to rehearse and perform their version of Act 5. There were some excellent performances, some bizarre costumes, and some very interesting accents. I'm sure you can tell from the photographs that they had a lot of fun too!



English Department



attendance MATTERS

'well done to all the year groups that are above 97%

As we are at the end of another month, next week's newsletter will bring information about the monthly form competition but I just wanted to share how impressed I have been with the attendance of students this week overall.

In the last week of half term, our overall school attendance has been back above our ambitious school target of 97%. The figures for each year are shown here:

Year 7	96.27%
Year 8	98.61%
Year 9	98.19%
Year 10	98.81%
Year 11	97.56%
Year 12	96.30%
Year 13	93.14%



Ambassadors go out and about

Last Thursday, as our first main initiative as History Ambassadors in the New Year, Lucy and I went to the nearby secondary school, Charlton, in the hopes of promoting the History A level course here at Newport and also to answer any questions the students might have in relation to exams and life in the sixth form. Whilst there, we talked to two groups of groups of girls in years 10 and 11, giving our insight into how to deal with their upcoming GCSE exams (especially to the year 11 students) and reassuring them that it's not as bad as they're thinking! We also focused on exam technique, explaining what we felt were the best ways to both plan and answer exam style questions. Following this, we promoted the exceptional history course here, giving them a rundown of the assessment and the course topics we have covered so far. Overall, the visit was very successful and hopefully expelled any worries the groups had surrounding GCSEs, whilst also promoting the option of taking A levels at Newport Girls'. Over the next few months, our aim is to expand this idea to other secondary schools in the area, including Burton Borough. **Aime T and Lucy D**

NGHS is (almost) 100 years old

As Mr Scott mentioned a few weeks ago, we are planning our celebrations ready for the big Centenary day on Saturday 29 June 2019, when the school will be opened up to the local community, to share in our very special day. Ahead of that, we are holding two 'Remembering NGHS' events on the afternoons of Thursday 28 March (1.30-5.00pm) and Friday 29 March 2019 (1.30pm-3.30pm) when we are inviting former staff, students and friends of the school to come in and share their memories, photographs or memorabilia with current students. We would like to collate the stories to make an exhibition which we would share with everyone in June on the Open Day.

Students will be on hand to record these stories and find out more about their school! Should you wish to be a part of one of these special afternoons or have any artefacts, history, photographs, uniform items from the last one hundred years or can help us with the Centenary celebrations (balloons, cake, notice boards, Victorian themed items etc., please let Miss Davies know: 100@nghs.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!



Congratulations!



Ella Gregory (Y7 S2) who is the new Junior Swimming Club Captain for Newport Swimming Club. Ella has been swimming since the age of 8 and has competed in a lot of local and county competitions.



Congratulations!



Sophie Li and Lucy Skidmore (Y8) for their performances in the Young Musician of the Year competition. Sophie won the instrumental category and Lucy was runner up in the vocal category. They competed against Burton Borough School and performed to an exceptional standard. Sophie now proceeds to the next regional round at Wolverhampton Music School this weekend.



On Valentine's Day our Year 11s competed in their last netball tournament as a team, and they remained unbeaten, taking first place! We look forward to these talented players joining our Sixth Form team next year.

Sports Roundup (Half Term 3)

This half term our students have been participating in an array of sports such as gymnastics, netball, benchball, team building, problem solving, dance and cricket. 7Y and 8Y have enjoyed a professional cricket coach Tyler delivering their lessons on a Thursday. The purpose of these sessions was to hopefully spark an interest in the sport amongst learners and encourage them to join a club. Tyler has also been running an all year lunch time club which was highly attended with 36 attendees on average! It has also been fantastic to see the year 11s having fun and enjoying activities such as team building and dance. This has really demonstrated what a lovely close knit group they all are and how much they have grown and developed since year 7. As always, each class competed in an inter-house competition in the sport that they had been focusing on for this half term, and the results are as followed:

House	Points	Placed
AUSTEN	49.5	3rd
RODDAM	54	1st
SEACOLE	52.5	2nd

Roddam have retained their title for another half term.

Well done!

Forthcoming Dates...

Date	Event	Year(s)
Mon 4 Mar	Parents Mtg—Netball Wkend, 7pm	Y7
Wed 6 Mar	Options Forms to Reception	Y9
Thu 7 Mar	World Book Day German Exchange Meeting, 7pm	All Y10
Fri 8 Mar	International Women's Day	All
Tue 12 Mar	Marketing photographer visits Chemistry Lecture, 4.15pm	All Y12/13
Wed 13 Mar	School Photographer in PTA Meeting	Y10/13 7pm
Thu 14 Mar	MFL students to Concord College Head Girl Team interviews	Y11-12 Y12
Fri 15 Mar	Lower School HGT interviews Netball residential departs 4pm	Y9 Y7

Health & Wellbeing Top Tip

Everybody has a gift, they just unwrap them at different times.