



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

We are only a few weeks away from the end of this first full term and at Nova it is already beginning to feel more and more like Christmas with the tree and the snowmen now up in the atrium. We look forward over the next few weeks to lots of fun Christmas events including **Christmas lunch for students** on 17th December and the **Christmas Concert** on 18th December.

I want to take the opportunity in this newsletter to recognise Year 11 students who have now finished their first full set of mock exams. The students have worked very hard over the last few weeks and have shown great commitment. Mock exams are ultimately an opportunity to practice for the real exams in the summer and the students have taken this opportunity with the seriousness that it deserves. We look forward to meeting with Year 11 parents at the parents' evening on 19th December to discuss the results of these mock examinations.

At Nova we work to continually emphasise the important of having good attendance to school. At both Nova and in schools across the country there is clear evidence that attendance over a student's time at school has a clear link to their grades at the end of Year 11. As a school we work hard to celebrate and recognise

good attendance both on an individual basis and as a tutor group. We know that families share our desire for their children to have good attendance and we want to encourage good attendance in these final few weeks of term. These weeks are especially important because when we come back after the holidays we will have our first set of mid-year assessments for all year 7 – 10 students beginning the week of 20th January. These final few weeks of term provide important preparation time for these assessments. We will be sharing more information about these annual mid-year assessments over the coming weeks.

Finally, we have over the last few weeks been asking staff, parents and students to complete the annual United Learning surveys. Thank you to everyone who has completed the survey already, your feedback is very valuable to help us continually improve as a school. The survey remains open for another week until the 6th December for both students and parents.

We look forward to celebrating the Christmas season with you and your children over the coming weeks.

James Harding-Mbogo
Principal



**Swindon Youth
Festival of Literature**

Pages 5,6,7

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DECEMBER 2024

Wednesday 18th—Christmas Concert

Thursday 19th—Year 11 Parents' Evening

Friday 20th—Christmas Jumper Day/Last day of term

JANUARY 2025

Tuesday 7th—First day of term

Tuesday 7th—Students return to school

Thursday 9th—Year 10 Work Experience Evening

Wednesday 22nd—SEN Coffee Morning

Saturday 25th—Year 6 Catalyst Taster Session

HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL MERITS

W/E 15TH NOVEMBER

Year 7

Year 8

Year 9

Year 10

Year 11



W/E 22ND NOVEMBER

Year 7

Year 8

Year 9

Year 10

Year 11



HIGHEST ATTENDING TUTOR GROUP

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING:

W/E 15TH NOVEMBER

7I

8G

9G

10F

11C

W/E 22ND NOVEMBER

7E

8I

9G

10F

11H

HIGH STANDARDS = HIGH ACHIEVEMENTS

House Championships 2024/25



16260



14723



14515



13149

Next house events are:

- Friday competitions this week

- The first of the Big Four competitions

Spelling Bee – w/c 9th
December 500 points available

- House Sport. Competition TBC as is weather dependent
250 points available
- Highest attending house
250 points available



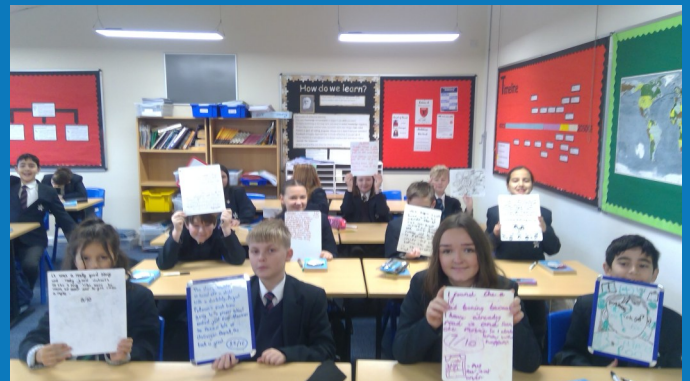
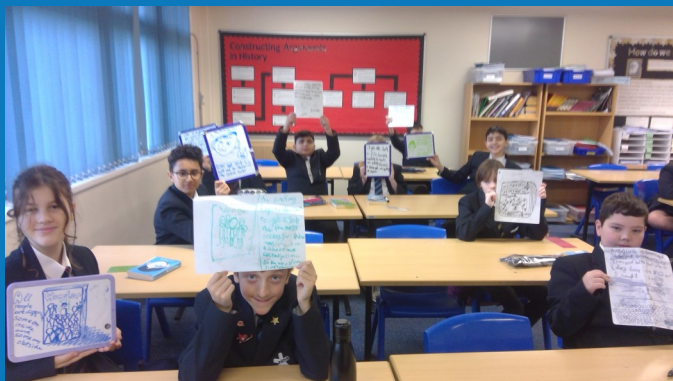
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Tutor Time Literacy Programme

As part of the tutor time literacy programme, 7E completed tasks based on their completed reading book, *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio. Some redesigned the front cover, others wrote a book review focusing on aspects of the novel they enjoyed and others which they felt could be done differently and some rewrote the ending.

There were some fabulous examples of analytical work and 7E are looking forward to their next reading book.

Miss Derham



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YEAR 11



We're only about three months into Year 11 and, as a year group, Year 11 have already achieved and experienced so much; they've had the chance to further explore their possible

careers and pathways at Futures' Evening, they've seen *An Inspector Calls* performed live as part of an English trip, they've completed Maths revision at Harry Potter Studios, Hospitality and Catering pupils have completed their practical exams, and all of Year 11 have just completed their first round of PPE exams to help them prepare for final exams in the Summer.

As a Head of Year, I'm so proud of Year 11 and how they have conducted themselves over the last two terms. Whether it's their super smart uniform, their mature conduct around the school, their excellent attendance to period 6 lessons, or their general hard work inside and outside the classroom, Year 11 clearly listened carefully when, at the end of year 10, their tutors told them that "with great power comes great responsibility" and are acting as role models for

the rest of the school. At the end of term 1, I had the privilege of giving an assembly during which Year 11 heard all of the wonderful things teachers had been saying about them. I can't wait to be inundated with another flood of 'second hand compliments' from teachers and staff at the end of this term.

Our next round of PPEs is in March and there are now under 200 days before most final exams which will take place in the Summer. Just as they have been, Year 11 need to continue to 'take bites out of the elephant' every day and make sure that they keep momentum right up until the last exam in June so that they can 'run through the tape'.

The secrets to success in Year 11 are simple but powerful:

- Attend lessons.
- Give 100% inside and outside the classroom.
- Complete independent revision.

Miss R Sayers
Head of Year 11



SWINDON YOUTH FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE

ASH DICKINSON

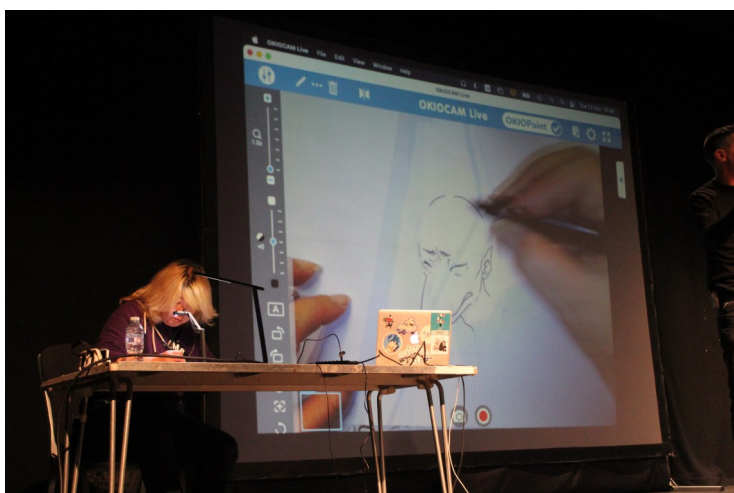
Poet Ash Dickinson visited Nova to perform his poetry and do a workshop with the whole of year 7. Ash gave the students ideas to create their own poems in the form of Shadorma, a Spanish 6-line syllabic poem, and gave them helpful tips to write them, before asking some of the students to share their poems with everyone. Everyone really enjoyed this session with a lot of creativity in the poems that they wrote, showing the students that poetry can be interesting and fun to create.



JULIAN SEDGWICK AND CHIE KUTSUWADA

49 Students from Years 7,8 and 9 attended an event along with the other 11 Swindon secondary schools at the Wyvern Theatre to see the author Julian Sedgwick and illustrator Chie Kutsuwada perform. Julian and Chie spoke to students about how they created the book *Tsunami Girl*. Julian spoke about how he spends time in Japan and speaking to survivors from the tsunami. He shared photos from his trips there and spoke about the Japanese and their beliefs in ghosts. Chie spoke about her life, how and what inspires her to draw the characters in the books.

Julian read a couple of chapters from the book while Chie drew two of the characters, it was amazing to see how quickly she could draw them with such detail. At the end of the session, they took questions from students that were chosen and one of our students Harry Courts was able to ask the question, “what do you do in your free time”?



SWINDON YOUTH FESTIVAL OF LITERATURE

HELEN DENNIS

Author Helen Dennis visited Nova for the day. Helen spoke to the whole of year 7 about being how she became a writer from an early age and her journey to getting a book published.

Helen then did two workshops with classes on code cracking, where she got them thinking about the

images we see and how different people see different things. She got the students talking about if they could fix their age what would it be and why, and got them to do some mind mapping to come up with ideas for a story.

At break time and lunch time Helen was in the library to sign students books and



JENNY MCLACHLAN

Author Jenny McLachlan visited Nova to meet Year 5 and 6 pupils from Haydon Wick, Rodbourne Cheney and Greenmeadow primary schools.

Jenny entertained the children with a talk about her *Land of Roar* books and even surprised them with her dragon which was hiding under the table! At the end of the performance, Jenny signed the children's books and bookmarks.

At the end of the performance, Jenny signed the children's books and bookmarks.

Thank you to our student librarians Esme Connell, Harry Courts, Travis Jordan and Layla Sage, who all helped with this event.



SYFL BOOK QUIZ

Our book quiz team travelled to Ridgeway School to take part in the annual SYFL book quiz with the other 11 Swindon secondary schools. There were 12 rounds of different topics relating to reading which students had to answer working as a team. The six students all worked really hard together throughout the 12 rounds of questions, and did well, coming joint 5th.



CELEBRATION EVENT

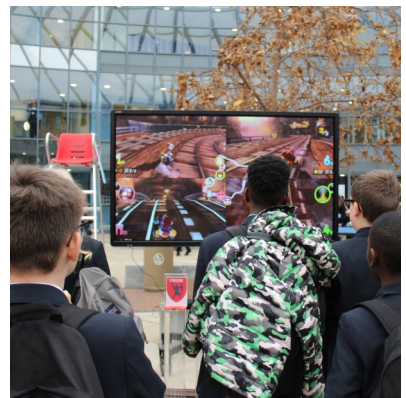
All the competition winners from the 12 secondary schools, quiz teams and library ambassadors were invited to the Pattern Church for a celebration evening together with their families, where prizes and certificates were handed out by the Mayor of Swindon and sponsors of the Festival.



CHILDREN IN NEED

Student leaders had the pleasure of covering their teachers in gunge for this year's Children in Need. Mr Wilkinson, Mr Unwin and Mr Griffiths took part in a "fastest finger" quiz, with each round involving two teachers being covered in gunge if they didn't answer the questions quickly enough.

Meanwhile in the atrium, students took part in inflatable football and mario kart in the atrium. We raised a total of £130.75 for the charity.



CATALYST STREAM



With more than half the term behind us, it's been a busy few weeks for the Catalyst stream!

Year 7 have been completing a unit in Engineering on biomimicry, looking at how nature has inspired Engineers to think creatively and invent some innovative designs. They've shown excellent perseverance in designing transportation that uses designs in nature to harness the wind to move across a classroom!

Year 8 have had an interesting few weeks designing and building water filters, finishing off their Engineering unit on 'How engineers save lives'. They have also displayed their creative sides through research and designing informative posters about an element of their choice – Ms Wincer was very impressed!



Last Monday, **Year 9** Catalyst scholars attended a workshop delivered by Sarah Cosgriff,

an award-winning science communicator working with **Physics Partners**, and provided our pupils with an insight into the uses of and careers in Physics. The 3-hour enrichment session included discussions into 'What is Physics', examining case studies and exploring different careers involving Physics that might appeal to their skills and interests. The morning was enjoyed by all, and Sarah was particularly impressed by the group's participation and behaviour.

Dr Spreadbury

Catalyst STEM Stream Coordinator



PLACES ARE STILL AVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING TRIPS

Y9 Bath University 26th March

Year 10 Art & Photography trip to Bristol 12th December

Year 8 Residential w/c 23th June 2025

Year 10 Science Live! 11th February

LOOK OUT FOR THESE TRIPS COMING SOON

Year 11 Business Studies trip to Cadbury World 6th January

Y8 RE Mosque Visit 4th February

Year 10 trip to USCF 6th February

Year 10 Bath University 25th February

Year 10 Geography Fieldtrip to Swanage 24th & 25th March

Year 9 STEM workshop Bath University 25th March

To book any trip visit www.parentpay.com

CLICK HERE TO SEE LAST YEAR'S TRIPS
ON THE WEBSITE



FRIDAY CHALLENGE

Congratulations to Aquila House who were the winners of this week's Friday Challenge, winning 50 points for their House.



Vote for Nova Hreod at TESCO



An educational geography trip that allows students to explore and learn about various physical landscapes.

Vote in stores until the 12th of January:

Liden Exp SN3 6HP
Prioryval Exp SN25 2LR
Wroughton Exp SN4 9LN
Swindon Extra SN1 2EH
Woodshaw Wtn Bass SN4 8NE
Ramleaze Dv Exp SN5 5PY
Highworth Exp SN6 7DN

Abbey Mds Exp SN25 4YX
Pinehurst Exp SN2 1QR
Cheney Manor Rd SN2 2PF
Cricklade Express SN6 6BX
Freshbrook Express SN5 8LY
Toothill Village Exp SN5 8DA

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Please see Miss Fitzgerald if you have any questions

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

At Nova we have a brilliant track record for Sparx Maths completion, and this is partly due to the excellent support sessions run by our fantastic Sparx Maths Ambassadors. These are open to everyone and take place on Tuesday lunchtimes and Thursday breaktimes in SB9.



We have a 5 year running streak of being the best Sparx maths school in Swindon having hit the momentous milestone of '**2 MILLION correctly answered questions**' in July 2024. This has now reset since September 2024 and we have already done 500,000+ correctly answered questions as a school! Can we hit the 1 MILLION milestone by February 2025 like we did earlier in 2024? This is a fantastic achievement and I just want to remind all students that they can still earn extra Star slips by doing XP Boost and/or Target (yes, you can earn 2 star slips a week!). This makes for effective revision before BIEs and GCSEs. There is also the Independent learning tab too.

On a sweet note, we have successfully run Friday break time Sparx Sweets in the Theatre where Sparx Ambassadors (led by Mrs Malik) give merits, stickers, sweets and lollipops for EARLY SPARX COMPLETION. For the last few Fridays of 2024, it's also a chance to double rewards by bringing along a friend who has done Sparx early as well. It's cool to do school!

The next challenge for the Sparx Ambassadors is to plan Pi Day activities for next Spring; last year we did the 100 digits of Pi Challenge and a lucky Y7 winner won an entire CHOCOLATE CAKE!

Mrs Malik

Student Leadership Coordinator

NEWS FROM YEAR 7

As we approach the middle of Term 2, I would like to pause and reflect on the fantastic progress Year 7 has made since joining Nova Hreod Academy. Transitioning to secondary school is a big step, and our students have embraced the challenge with enthusiasm, teamwork, and a drive to succeed.

One of the highlights this term has been the incredible participation in our weekly Friday challenges, including Giant Jenga, Ring Toss, Balloon Tower, Wellie Wanging, Bowling, and Musical Chairs for European Day of Languages. The creativity and determination shown during these events have been a joy to witness, with some truly stellar performances along the way.

In Week 1 of Term 2, Year 7 students also impressed in the Music department's *Young Musician of the Year* competition, showcasing their incredible talent and confidence from the very start of the term.



On the sports field, Year 7 have also excelled, representing Nova in a Swindon-wide competition involving all 13 secondary schools. The Year 7 girls achieved an impressive 5th place, and the boys secured 7th—a testament to their effort and team spirit.

As we look ahead, I encourage all Year 7 students to continue building on this strong foundation, making the most of every opportunity. Thank you to parents and carers for your ongoing support—it's been instrumental in helping our students thrive.

Here's to even more success in the terms ahead!

Mr Harbour
Head of Year 7





Year 6

CATALYST STREAM TASTER SESSION

ACIDS, BASES AND DNA

The second in a series of challenging taster sessions for pupils considering the Catalyst STEM Stream for September 2025.



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**SATURDAY
7 DECEMBER
2024**

9.45am - 12.15pm



[Register here](#)

CATALYST STEM STREAM

Catalyst is Nova's specialist provision for ambitious KS3 scholars who have a strong interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

www.novahreodacademy.org.uk/catalyst-stream





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Nova Hreod Academy
Performing Arts Faculty presents

Creative Christmas Extravaganza 2024

Featuring performances from our
talented scholars in the Performing Arts Faculty!

Wednesday December 18th

Join us in the diner from 6pm
for festive refreshments
Show starts in the theatre at 6.30pm

Tickets £1.50 each on Parentpay
(includes mince pie and hot drink)

Nova Hreod Academy

Akers Way, Swindon, SN2 2NQ

01793 528800

www.novahreodacademy.org.uk

admin@novahreodacademy.org.uk



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