

'Huge sense OF HOPE'

Assistant Principal 'owes a debt of gratitude' to NHS after return to work

ASSISTANT Principal Mr Wharam is back in the classroom just five months after being diagnosed with a rare eye cancer.

He got the shock diagnosis in the summer when visiting the doctors after partially losing his sight.

He says the "amazing" treatment he received from specialists has allowed him to quickly return to teaching.

He has spoken about the amazing cutting-edge scientific technology that saved his life in a bid to inspire his students.

The geography teacher said: "I owe a debt of gratitude to the immensely talented NHS team who looked after me. Their care and astonishing expertise mean that I am facing the new year with a huge sense of hope".

"The science they used to treat the cancer was incredible.

"I am talking about it now in the hope our budding scientists may consider a career in radiology in the future."

Mr Wharam, who has been a teacher for over 20 years, thanked the school community for helping him return to work.

He said: "I'm fine and didn't want to make a fuss about it. I feel a bit self-conscious about having to re-learn how to do everyday things with reduced visibility, but the incredible support I have had has been profoundly moving.

"My family, friends, colleagues, students and supporters at MacMillan have been incredible. I count myself very lucky."



'Amazing' treatment: Mr Wharam

'His dedication is inspiring'

Principal Ms Banner (*inset*) on Mr Wharam's return

IF YOU are looking for a Christmas miracle, you need to look no further than the miraculous return to the classroom of our Assistant Principal, Mr Wharam.

A warm, kind and dedicated teacher, he was sorely missed not just in the classroom but around the school while away battling cancer.

He has been able to return to us just five months after his diagnosis in the summer, typically focusing on how his experience can benefit our students.

This is a person who is keen to turn his challenges to good account by using them to hopefully inspire the youngsters



at this school into a fulfilling career.

His personal strength and dedication to the profession are truly inspiring, and we count ourselves very fortunate to have him back at school.

As we welcome him back into the fold, let us celebrate his courage and use this remarkable story as a source of motivation for all of us, especially our students.

Elsewhere, you will read about our recently all-conquering boys' football team taking on the best in the county in the school's national cup.

Having already triumphed in Herefordshire, they are now on the road to glory on the national stage. We wish them well.

As the festive period approaches, our students have been getting into the Christmas spirit with a series of trips and activities. We want our students to not only have great grades when they leave school but also great memories. We want them to look back on their time at our school fondly, remembering all these types of special occasions. These types of trips add to their cultural capital, helping them grow culturally as well as academically.

Finally, I would like to wish you a restful winter break. Have a great Christmas. I will see you all in the new year.

At the beginning of this term, a new specialist unit supporting students with autism was opened at Earl Mortimer College. The base is called the Hive. Special Education Needs Coordinator Ms Hardy says it will help to foster an inclusive environment across the school

‘The Hive will make a positive, lasting impact’

As a school, we constantly strive to provide the best support and opportunities for our children.

One of the primary goals of the Hive is to foster an inclusive environment where children with autism can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

By offering specialised support and tailored educational programs, the Hive ensures that all students have access to quality education.

The focus is on recognising and nurturing the unique strengths and abilities of each child, allowing them to reach their full potential.

“Their expertise will undoubtedly contribute to creating a nurturing and safe learning environment where children can flourish”

Our team of qualified and dedicated staff members will work closely with the students. These professionals have extensive experience in supporting young people with autism and have a deep understanding of their needs. Their expertise will undoubtedly contribute to creating a nurturing and safe learning environment where children can flourish.

Recognising that every child with autism has unique requirements, each child at the Hive will follow their own personalised, tailored health plan designed to address their specific



FEELING FESTIVE: Students in the Hive have been making Christmas decorations for sale at the forthcoming fayre.

needs, strengths and learning styles.

In addition to academic subjects, the base will focus on developing social skills, communication abilities and independence. This comprehensive approach will empower children with autism to navigate various aspects of

school life confidently, enhancing their overall wellbeing.

Through collaboration with parents, and a commitment to creating a safe and stimulating environment, the Hive will make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of children with autism.



GREAT RESPONSIBILITY: Our Year 9 leadership academy

New starters get chance to bond in border visit

OUR new Year 7 students got the chance to bond with their new classmates and teachers during a trip.

The beginning of term saw our new starters travel to the Welsh border to Oaker Wood for an activity trip.

They learned team building and communication skills while trying a range of activities, including paintballing high ropes and a zip wire.

Mrs Hughes said: The trip gives the students a chance to start to build relationships with their peers in a different environment outside of school.

It requires them to work together to solve problems and navigate new environments. This can help them develop important skills that will serve them in the classroom and in life."

Principal Ms Banner said: "Starting school can be a very daunting process for students, the transition from primary to secondary is a big change. These trips give our students the chance to bond with their new peers, meet their teachers in a more informal setting and learn crucial skills.

"These types of trips are the bedrock and foundation of feeling at home in secondary school. The children had a great time but, most importantly, came back feeling more at ease in their surroundings."



Camping huts at Oaker Wood

Students' huge warm welcome



OUR new Year 7 students learned what to expect from their time at Earl Mortimer College at our welcome ceremony.

Principal Ms Banner talked about transitioning

from primary school and life at secondary school at the service held at the Priory Church.

She said: "It is really important to make our

students feel welcome when they join us from primary school.

"We are very fortunate to be able to do that in the wonderful setting of the Priory Church."

Pairing up against bullying



The school marks Odd Socks Day as part of Anti-Bullying Week

STUDENTS gave a big thumbs down to bullying by celebrating their differences and individuality during Odd Socks Day.

The school marked Anti-Bullying Week by encouraging students to wear different colour socks to help raise awareness.

There were also special workshops during tutor time, including a session titled 'the war on banter', which looked at how some jokes can be hurtful.

Students also explored how bad behaviour in class impacts others and practised scenarios where bullying could be challenged.

There were also mindfulness activities and a poetry competition. Events were supported by the student Prevent Bullying Now team.

“One person's banter could be someone else's harmful comment”

Teacher Mrs Gummer said: “At this school we remain extremely vigilant for any type of behaviour which could make our students feel uncomfortable.

“Bullying takes many different forms. We are teaching our students that sometimes, maybe even unintentionally, they could be impacting others.

“One person's banter could be someone else's harmful comment, so it is as much about educating than it is anything else.”



Choir in regal congregation

THE EMC choir were among the congregation at a Christmas carol service given the royal seal of approval.

The Princess of Wales (*above*) designated Leominster Priory as one of only 12 churches in the UK to host a Together at Christmas Community Carol Service.

Our head boy and girl lead the final prayer while catering students made mince pies, and served tea and coffee.

All students were given a signed message from Her Royal Highness Princess Catherine of Wales.

The service was hosted by Herefordshire's Lord-Lieutenant Edward Harley CBE and Reverend Guy Cole.

Good to glow after mocks

YEAR 11 students got the chance to ice skate and meet Santa at the Christmas-themed Winter Glow fair.

The youngsters immersed themselves in the twinkling winter wonderland at the Three Counties Showground.

The trip was a reward for their hard work during recent GCSE mock exams.

Meanwhile, students in the other year groups got the chance to ice skate at school.

The hall was taken over by a huge portable ice rink with each year group given the chance to take to the ice.

Principal Ms Banner said: “Our Year 11 students have been absolute stars this term. They have been working so hard for their GCSEs.

“They really deserved to have some fun. The Winter Glow trip was our way of saying thank you for the effort you are putting in.

“The rest of the school have also worked very hard, so we didn't want to leave them out. Everyone loves the portable ice rink.”



Students went to the Three Counties Showground as a reward for hard work



Journey to streets paved with gold

STUDENTS were treated to a purr-fect rags to riches tale during a Christmas pantomime outing to mark the end of the year.

They joined plucky Dick Whittington and his trusty cat on their quest for fame and fortune during a trip to the Courtyard Theatre in Hereford.

The Year 7, 9 and 11 students were treated to an action-packed swashbuckling story, with magnificent musical numbers and spectacular sets.

Witnesses to double, double toil and trouble

YEAR 10 and 11 students travelled to the home of William Shakespeare to watch a performance of Macbeth.

The Bard's words came to life during a dramatic rendering of his play at the Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Students furthered their understanding of the text they are studying for GCSE English literature exams while at the Royal Shakespeare Company production.

Teacher Mr Quigley said: "This production from the RSC of Macbeth will live long in the memory of our students which will in turn help with their exams.

"These types of trips are not only really important for their education but also help to broaden their horizons.

"They have asked if we can return to Stratford-upon-Avon to see Romeo and Juliet, which just goes to show what a hugely positive impact the show had on students."



Students watched Macbeth at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon

Charity provides big box of books

THE selection of books on offer in our library just got a lot bigger thanks to a kind donation from a literacy charity.

The school library was in receipt of a very generous gift of 140 new books thanks to charity Read for Good.

Our librarian, Ms Ridd, successfully applied for their Big Box of Books, which is now in stock and available to borrow from our library.

Reading is Wright stuff

OUR Year 7 and 8 students are taking part in a project run by the Books Trust aimed at inspiring a love of reading.

They were given a choice of 16 books to take home and keep from a list carefully curated by a panel of experts for the Bookbuzz project.

It ensures quality and suitability, and encourages reading for pleasure.

The most popular book in the EMC library is a fiction book based on former England striker Ian Wright's childhood, called Striking Out.

Other titles available include *Swan Song* by Gill Lewis, *Swarm Rising* by astronaut Tim Peake and *Our Sister, Again* by Sophie Cameron.

Ms Ridd said: "This is an excellent project, which has really helped get students stuck into books."

"The Ian Wright book has proved popular as have the horror-themed stories. The books are really well chosen."

Sharing help with stress

Coping with stress was the focus of our exam success evening with students and families.

Teachers outlined how students can look after their mental health during their GCSEs.

They were signposted to resources as well as getting top tips on how to maintain wellbeing.

There were also exam skills workshops, sharing tips on how to maximise revision time.

Students and Families Support Manager Mrs Neil said: "Happy, balanced and relaxed students are much more likely to do well in their exams than those who are stressed."

"We have great families who came along and were very engaged in supporting their children. It was a really positive evening."

Read
for
Good



SPIRIT OF THE SEASON: Students made baubles, doves and gold rings for the Priory Christmas Tree. The theme was the 12 days of Christmas.



The Year 8 boys football team has received high praise

Is team better than Bowen's?

OUR Year 8 boys football team are hoping to go one step further in a national competition after becoming Herefordshire champs last year.

They got the academic year off to a winning start in their fifth round national cup match, following their county cup victory in Year 7.

The match was played at Edgar Street, where Ronnie Radford scored his legendary goal for Herefordshire United in the FA Cup third round in 1972.

The team won five games last year, scoring a whopping 39 goals with top-scorer Charlie now on the books of Shrewsbury Town on

the back of stand-out performances.

Manager Mr Chadd remembers the team that featured now-Premier League star Jarrod Bowen and says this one could even be better.

He said: "I am running out of superlatives for this incredible group of players. They play together as a team and have a great attitude. There also a lot of very talented players. In fact, I think this is the best team since the team that the school has produced since the one that featured Jarrod Bowen.

"They have a few more years to play together and the way they are going they could even be better. It is an exciting time."

New kits due to funding

OUR sports teams will be decked out in brand new kits thanks to funding from the school.

The football, netball and rugby team across year groups will all get brand-new kit.

Principal Ms Banner said: "Our students always play with passion, heart and determination. They need a kit to match."

Great reach

BASKETBALL star and motivational speaker Chris Tawiah gave an inspiring talk to students during a visit this term.

The 6ft 9ins centre ran a workshop and answered questions during sessions with Year 8 students.

The trip was part of Project Elevate which runs sessions aimed at boosting confidence, self-esteem, motivation and encouraging youngster to become independent thinkers.

Head of PE Mr Chadd said: "We were



Students met Chris Tawiah during the basketballer's visit

really pleased to welcome Chris to the school. He was a huge presence not just with his size but personality. The sessions were really inspiring and students came away feeling really energised by the way he communicated."