



Alumni News

Issue 7. July 2025



whitburnsixthform



@WhitSixthForm

We love gathering together news about our alumni via the annual alumni survey, LinkedIn, emails & word-of-mouth from younger siblings & parents including graduations, promotions, new jobs & travel adventures.

An increasing community of nearly 900 alumni are setting out on professional pathways & making a real difference in the local & national communities.

We hope you enjoy reading some of this news in this year's bulletin. We heard from most of the students featured [via our annual survey](#) but please drop Mr Craggs a line at lcraggs@whitburncofeacademy.org if you have news to share.



Name	Class of:	Graduating from:	In (subject):	Next Steps:
Allen, Katie	2021	University of Derby	MSc Criminal Investigation	Seeking graduate employment.
Allen, Patrick	2021	Newcastle University	BSc Geospatial Engineering	Graduate Engineer, BAE Systems
Ashman, Jack	2022	Queen Mary University of London	BA Geography	MSc Marketing at The London School of Economics (LSE)
Binns, Rebecca	2022	York St John University	BSc Sports Science	Masters in Physiotherapy
Casey, Alice	2020	Newcastle University	BDS Dental Surgery	Foundation training in the North East
Crosbie, Daniel	2022	University of Cambridge	BA History and Politics	Masters in Economic History at University of Cambridge
Dix, Erin	2019	Northumbria University	MSc Natural Sciences	FTE: Edwards Architecture as an Architectural Technician and Designer
Elliott, Jasmine	2020	University of Manchester	MusB Music	Masters in Music Performance Studies at University of Manchester
Henry, Nathan	2020	Anglia Ruskin University	MBChB Medicine	Foundation training in the North West
Lishman, Matthew	2021	Durham University	MEng Engineering (Renewable)	Analyst job in Newcastle. Look into research opportunities
McQuillan, Faye	2022	Newcastle University	BSc Marine Zoology	Masters at Newcastle University
Minto, Harrison	2021	University of Leeds	BSc Economics	Graduate Auditor pursuing professional qualifications
Mitchell, Jasmine	2020	Northumbria University	BSc Professional Policing	FTE: Northumbria Police
Murta, Carl	2021	Durham University	MPhys Physics	Manager, Mark Hillery Arts Centre at Collingwood College.
O'Neill, Hayden	2022	Northumbria University	BSc Computer Science	Junior Web Developer, Canny Creative
Palmer, Eve	2017	Durham University	BA Primary Education	Gap Year, travelling
Perera, Kieran	2017	Newcastle University	BDS Dental Surgery	Foundation training in the North East
Rainbow, Jessica	2019	University of Sunderland	MBChB Medicine	Foundation training in the North East
Ridge, Eve	2019	University of Sunderland	BSc Adult Nursing	FTE: Nursing
Rosenthal, Katie	2022	Newcastle University	BA History	Graduate Scheme in HR
Shelmerdine, Lily	2021	Durham University	BA Primary Education	FTE Business Development Executive at Living North Magazine
Skirrow, Harriet	2021	Northumbria University	BSc Psychology	TBC
Watson, Niamh	2021	Newcastle University	MPharm Pharmacy	Foundation training in the North East
Watson, Tara	2022	University of Sunderland	BA Professional Dance	Runs own Dance School
Wood, Archie	2021	Newcastle University	MSc in Bioinformatics	Gap Year, travelling. Seeking PhD position.
Woolston, Grace	2022	Newcastle University	BSc Biomedical Genetics	Masters at Newcastle University



We have built up an Alumni community of around 900 now and would love you to keep in touch. You may just want to receive these newsletters or follow us on LinkedIn. For those who want to be more involved, **we now have four established ways you can help us:**

1. Alumni Mentoring Programme. Maybe you needed a little more with applying for uni? Applying for Apprenticeships? Deciding on a career? Preparing for interview? Could you give a little time to support a current student by:

- Giving some advice about your course/uni?
- Helping them prepare for interview?
- Helping prepare for interviews and assessment centres for (Degree) Apprenticeships?
- Offering a shadowing opportunity?

Work Experience: Post-pandemic it is still difficult to get quality work placements due to hybrid working.

If you are able to offer a placement to either Y10 and/or Y12 students, please contact Mr Moore: amoore@whitburncofeacademy.org

2. Alumni Awards. At Christmas we presented three alumni-sponsored awards. Former students chose a category & sponsored an award by commissioning a trophy or purchasing a book voucher and then helping to choose a recipient.

Please get in touch if you feel you could sponsor an award for around £20-25.

This year we had these alumni awards:

Award for Economics Excellence by Elliott Hearn, 2019

Award for Most Entrepreneurial Student by Jack Richardson, 2019

Award for Achievement Through Adversity by Charlotte Grundy, 2022



Trophies kindly purchased by Elliott & Jack

3. Visits. We are always keen to welcome you back to deliver talks & take part in careers fayres. **James Hardy, Class of 2017** returned again to deliver a talk about applying to medicine & our third *Apprenticeship Recruitment Fayre* saw several alumni representing their firms at this event including: **Aidan Eggleston Class of 2018; Joe Orrell Class of 2019; Catherine Drew Class of 2020 and Ben Kennedy Class of 2021.**

Complete our survey or email Mr Moore - amoore@whitburncofeacademy.org - to register your interest in helping out like this.



4. Alumni Posters. If you would be willing to feature on an *Alumni Poster* like those along the bottom of this page, email a photo & a short bio to Mr Craggs: lcraggs@whitburncofeacademy.org

We use these in two ways to inspire younger students:

Room naming - Sixth Form rooms all now have an Alumni Poster on the wall at the door.

National Careers Week Trail - Y7 & 8 students are challenged to complete a trail finding Alumni Posters in different departments & to find information about courses, qualifications, universities etc. Mr Moore gave prizes to those who completed the trail.



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News from the Class of 2017

2017 Natasha Alexander: Natasha has recently completed her thesis for an MRes at York St John. The research is based within the School of Art & Cultural Studies and is about civil war and conflict in Colombia. Natasha hopes to secure funding to start a PhD in the North East in the next year or so, but recent higher education cuts makes this a challenging environment. It has been great to have Natasha back as part of our exams invigilation team this summer as she funds her studies. A few years back, Natasha co-founded the Social Distance Art Project to support young artists during lockdown who were unable to get into their studios. [Read more about it here.](#)

News article

Online art exhibition gets huge response from students across the UK

Published: 28 May 2020



2017 Lewis Farish: Lewis re-located to RSM's Canada operations as Manager in Financial Consulting based in Toronto.

Lewis Farish • 1st
Supervisor in FAO at RSM Canada LLP CPA, CA & ACA (ICAEW)
Tyr • Edited •

Seven years later and another first day at RSM just this time in another country CA

Happy to announce I've started within the Financial Accounting Outsourcing team within RSM Canada in Toronto!

Massive thanks to everyone at RSM who helped get this across the line. Massive goodbye to everyone in the AIA team. It has been an absolute pleasure over the years and I wish everyone the best!

On the the next adventure and please everyone keep in touch!

2017 Tom Hockaday: Tom is inspiring young minds as a Year 5 teacher with responsibility for computing at Harlow Green Primary School in Gateshead.



Mr Hockaday - Year 5b Teacher /
Computing Lead



2017 Chloe Manuel: Chloe let us know of a promotion/job change via our alumni survey. She is now working as Senior Policy Manager in the British Council and FCDO on the Chevening Scholarship programme.

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2017 Max Hick: Max posted earlier this summer on LinkedIn about his new position as Wind Turbine Technician at Muehlhan Wind Service. His incredible profile picture confirms that this is a job that requires bravery as well as skill!

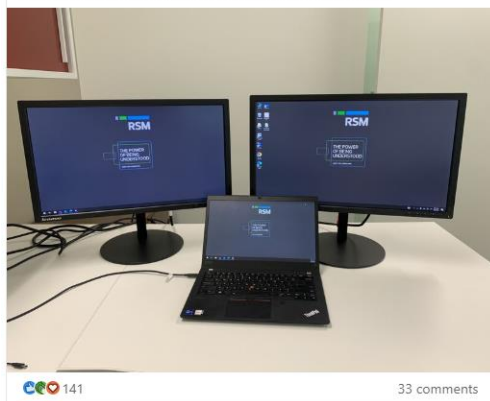


**Temp Work
Exam Invigilation**

Approx. £10 per hour
November/January/May-June. Contact:
lcraggs@whitburncofeacademy.org

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33 comments



News from the Class of 2018

2018 Aidan Eggleston: I am currently completing a level 7 Degree Apprenticeship at Northumbria University. This is alongside my role as an architectural trainee at Ryder Architecture. I am expected to graduate my masters degree next summer with my professional exams commencing the following year.

2018 James Hardy (below): I have successfully 'passed' F1 and am progressing into my Foundation Year 2. I will be working 4 month placements across Paediatrics, A&E (over Christmas...!) and GP/teaching in the coming year.

2018 Sam Carman: I am moving on to my final rotation in my first year as a doctor. I have completed rotations in: Acute Medicine, Stroke Medicine and now lastly Geriatric Medicine. It has been a steep learning curve this year, but I have progressed a lot clinically and professionally.

WHITBURN ALUMNI

I'm Aidan.
I left Whitburn with an offer from Leeds Beckett University to study Architecture. After my first year at Leeds I re-applied to Northumbria to continue with Architecture. In July 2022, I graduated Northumbria University with a 2:1. I have now secured a 1 year contract as an architectural design assistant at Ryder Architecture - the same company that designed Whitburn Sixth Form!

Northumbria University
NEWCASTLE
Ryder



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2018 Bethany Daniel: I completed my DoFE residential at Bendrigg, an accessible short break service for schools, groups, families and adults with disabilities and special needs. Whilst I was there, there was a group of children staying for the weekend so I got to work closely with these children and their families. It was such a rewarding weekend and I thoroughly enjoyed it! In fact, I enjoyed it that much, when I got home I applied for a job with STC working with children with SEND and by the end of the month had been offered the job! I've been there 6 months now and it was the best decision I've made since leaving Sixth Form. I'd never have even considered working with children until completing my gold DoFE residential.

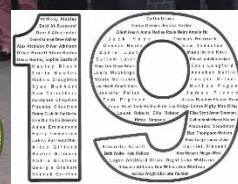
2018 Robyn Wilson: I've been working in events for over 7 years, but working in the sports industry has always been the dream, and now I get to do both at Sunderland AFC. My job? Bringing in you lovely lot to use the stadium for everything outside of the football. Conferences, parties, meetings, launches... if it needs a room (and maybe a pitch side view) I've got you. So if you fancy doing something a bit different with your next event or just want to see what the place looks like without 40,000 screaming fans drop me a message. I'll put the kettle on.

Please consider adding us on LinkedIn



Mr Craggs was also lucky enough to be at Wembley for the recent Play-Off Final. Whilst he didn't see Robyn, he did bump into, and have a chat with **Daniel Crosbie, Class of 2022.**



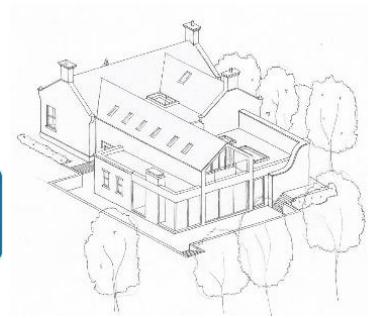


2019 Sophie Bestford: After graduating from university in 2023, I began my career at Full Circle Events and Exhibitions as a Group Marketing Assistant. The company - although a big player in the industry - didn't have an established marketing team at the time, so I had the unique opportunity to help shape things from the ground up.

Early on, I worked closely with a London-based branding agency team with the exciting opportunity to refresh the company's identity, update marketing assets, and redevelop the entire website. I was later invited to present the new brand direction to the company's 100+ employees - a proud milestone for me.

Later that year, I was honoured to receive the ESSA Young Person of the Industry Award at a national event. Following this recognition, I was promoted and now lead the marketing efforts across the entire business. With this I've also been able to bring in placement students and establish a dedicated marketing department- which has been mega!

2019 Erin Dix: Since graduating with a BA, I also received a PG Cert RIBA P1 in Architecture in June 2024. In September, I started a 4-year DA Masters which will give me a RIBA Part 2 and 3 to become an Architect. I started working at Edwards in 2022 and I am still there while I study part-time. I am also currently buying a house with my partner, due to move in summer 2025!



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2019 Eve Ridge: I graduated in 2022, and after 1.5 years of qualifying as a nurse, have taken on a leadership and management role to become a Junior Sister on my ward within Acute medicine. I am considering returning to uni to continue my studies and become a Nurse Practitioner at some point to further my clinical skills.

2019 Jess Rainbow: I am looking forward to my Elective year travels to Scotland, Vietnam and Thailand this summer and later beginning work as an FY1 doctor in Sunderland.

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News from the Class of 2020



2020 William Turner: As part of my role as a civil engineer, I have changed sites from South Bank Quay in Middlesbrough to the STIM (Southern Trench Cap Interim Membrane) project on the LLWR (Low Level Waste Repository) in Drigg, Cumbria. It involves placing a new, engineered protective layer over historic disposal trenches to ensure the safe containment of low-level radioactive nuclear waste for an extended period. This phase of work is crucial for the long-term management and security of the waste, with the membrane expected to remain in place for up to 100 years.

2020 Sharlize Sowden (below): I've been helping direct a programme for young musicians called '[Spotlight](#)' which helps them to get paid gigging experience, access unique performance opportunities, and receive guidance. We're creating a [Northern Music Alliance](#) to encourage more partnerships between musically-involved companies too. I've played a part in helping Our 1 Community develop their 'Don't Dis My Ability' programme, which helps young people ages 14-25 years with SEND create change in the community while supporting them into self-employment. Contact Sharlize if you want to get involved: sharlize@our1community.co.uk

2020 Jenny O'Callaghan: I graduated with a First Class Honours in Economics & Finance at Northumbria University last summer and I am now working as an Accounts Assistant at ARUP with a view to starting my accountancy qualifications with them very soon.

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2020 Olivia Wight: I am working as a year 5 primary school teacher at an international school in Spain.



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2020 Charlotte Beech:



Charlotte Beech • 1st
Radiological Protection Graduate at Sellafield Ltd, MSci Grad...
4d • 5

I had a fabulous time with my Sellafield graduate colleagues (as well as professionals from different sectors) supporting SRP at the Big Bang Fair at the NEC.

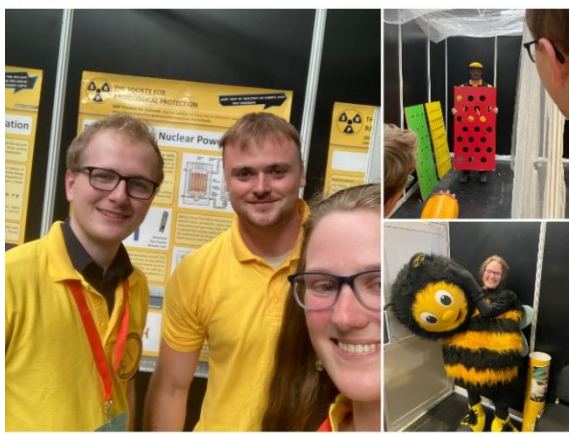
It was amazing to see such passion and commitment to outreach as well as hopefully spreading a little "buzz" about radiation protection and nuclear careers myself. 🐝👩
[Oscar Cook](#) [Hayden Bentley](#) [The Society for Radiological Protection](#)

2020 Jasmine Elliott: I graduated in December 2024 with a 2:1 in my Music degree. I have my place for the Music Performance Studies MusM Master's course confirmed to start this September too, at the same place where I completed my undergraduate degree- the University of Manchester.



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News from the Class of 2021



2021 Rhiannan Day: I accepted my training contract with Ashfords LLP in Exeter in 2023. Have just passed SQE1 and I am sitting SQE2 soon. Start position as trainee solicitor in September this year.

Mr Craggs: We also were please to see Rhiannan continues to use her creative talents as can be seen in her recent LinkedIn post:



It's not often I share my SFX work on this platform, but I am so excited to have dusted off my brushes for this incredible shoot with the talented [Mary Naughton](#).

Having been approached by Mary, we collaborated to create concepts surrounding a "Demon Bride" brief. I made a set of prosthetic horns and fixed them to the model, creating the effect that they were forcing through her head. I am so grateful to be able to continue my Special Effects pursuits alongside studying, and am thankful to people like Mary who make this possible!



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2021 Katie Allen: I graduated last year from the University of Derby with a BSc in Criminology. I will be graduating with my Msc in November.

I haven't full decided what I will do next. I'm still at Uni until November and then I'm going to take some time to relax work part-time before jumping into the real world! I'm thinking of going into victim support at the minute.



2021 Rebecca Cook: I have just finished my Masters in Pharmacy at Newcastle University and I am starting my Trainee Pharmacist year at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Gateshead. To get this I had to do an exam that every pharmacy student has to do in the UK and I got into the top 5%.

2021 Rosie O'Brien: I have started a new role at AESC, the battery plant that supplies Nissan. I'm going to be primarily in the new Gigafactory being built in Washington. I recently went to France for 10 days to get taught some new tests we are introducing into the laboratory at the plant as I work as an Internal Quality Lab Technician where I test raw materials which make the batteries.

2021 Lily Shelmerdine: I am still awaiting my results but I wrote my dissertation on *'The extent of which gender stereotypes impact year 6 students career-related attitudes in Sunderland'* and investigated the impacts of this on their futures. I'm starting a new job: a totally new venture in advertisement at Living North magazine !

2021 Carl Murta: I am taking up a one year job as Venue Manager of the Mark Hillery Arts Centre at Collingwood College, Durham Uni. I also recently received an honorary life membership of Collingwood College's Junior Common Room, an award given to a select number of students each year for contributions to the college community that go above & beyond.



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2021 Jozef Arkle: I graduated from University of Manchester in July 2024 with a BA in Economics and am now working as a Financial Adviser at Perspective Financial Group.

2021 Josh King: I graduated in December with a Management & Leadership Degree Apprenticeship from Northumbria (2:1) and also completed my CMI Assessment, passing with distinction. I am currently in a service advisor role in Durham to support career progression."



2022 Kyle Hutchinson: I am now a 3rd year Computer Science at York St John University currently writing my dissertation. I have taken great interest in Muay Thai and have been training for over two years now, competing in competitions.

2022 Jack Ashman: I achieved a first class degree with 92% for my dissertation and am now set for LSE to study for a Masters. Away from study, I walked in AW25 at London Fashion Week.



Newcastle University

The impact of phenotype heterogeneity on public awareness of genetic disease and research funding.

by
Grace Woolston

Supervisor: Dr. Joanna Elson

School of Biomedical Nutritional and Sport Sciences
Faculty of Medical Sciences
Newcastle University
Word Count: 4,992
27.03.25

2022 Grace Woolston: this summer I am graduating with a first-class honours in biomedical genetics. I'll be staying on at Newcastle next year for a masters in Epidemiology where I will be working on a Parkinson's disease project.

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2022 Katie Rosenthal: I managed to do my dissertation on NUFC and achieved a high 2:1! Best use of academic freedom ever!

2022 Hayden O'Neill: Hayden informed us via the Alumni survey that he was starting a new post as a Junior Web Developer with local firm, Canny Creative.

Hayden O'Neill • 2nd Junior Web Developer @ Canny Creative | Computer Sci...
+ Follow

I'm happy to share that I'm starting a new position as a Junior Web Developer at **Canny Creative**!



Starting a New Position

Patrick Allen and 14 others

8 comments

Like Comment Repost Send

2022 Ben Craggs: Ben (left) told us via the Alumni survey that he is working for Derbyshire geotechnical as a rope access technician.



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2022 Rebecca Binns: I started a side business of sports massage through my second year which has been quite successful and allowed me to quit my part time job. I also got engaged in December 2024 and now me and my partner are buying our own house in York in January 2026.

2022 Tara Watson: Tara told us via the Alumni survey that she is continuing to grow her East Boldon-based Dance School, [Diamond Dancers | East Boldon | Facebook](#)



2022 Daniel Crosbie: My dissertation explores why Nissan, one of the world's biggest carmakers, chose to build its first European car plant in Sunderland in the mid-1980s, at a time when most of the city's other factories were closing. It finds that the Thatcher government quietly re-wrote laws and offered hidden subsidies to secure the deal; it's original research, based on declassified government archives, uncovering details that haven't been reported before



News from the Class of 2023

2023 Riley McConville (right): I have got two university jobs, one with the university itself as an outreach rep doing campus tours, workshops and mentoring.

My other university job is with FutureMe, where I go into secondary schools, sixth forms and colleges delivering presentations about higher education, revision skills etc. I am currently planning my dual degree, where I will be going to either Austria, Switzerland or Canada (I'm hoping to go to Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Canada) to do a year at one of the three universities and be awarded another degree on top of my Business management degree which I'm currently working towards.

In the past year I have been awarded an employability award by the university too and I've recently become the new owner of The Sweet Shop on Sea Road.



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2023 Miranda Winter (right): I'm currently in Orlando taking part in the Disney Cultural Exchange Program! I am working as a PhotoPass photographer in Hollywood studios. It's an amazing opportunity that I would recommend to anyone as there is a multitude of roles you can work within the parks! It also allows you the opportunity to learn from people working in different areas of the company through many talks and events that are put on in the accommodations. It's great being able to make magic nearly every day!!



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2023 Hannah Thorpe: told us via the Alumni survey she is completing a Level 3 apprenticeship for Sunderland Care and Support (SCAS).



2023 James Ayre: I will be starting an industrial placement on the 1st July for a year at a chemical manufacturer called Verdant Specialty Solutions.

2023 Jacob Rennison (below): I am currently on a Second Year scholarship for Rugby League at Northumbria University and in my second year as a professional athlete for Newcastle Thunder.

2023 Evie Ruddick: I have a summer internship with Consultancy & Insurance firm Barnett Waddingham in their Leeds office. I will be working with the board management services team for 8 weeks this summer in pension management.

2023 Isaac Brydon (left): I now own a business with my brother called 'Cyber Fits' where I support, install & maintain businesses' IT.



2023 Logan Duckworth: I am studying at South Tyneside College to become a Teaching Assistant and hope to acquire an apprenticeship at Epina Business and Enterprise School for September.



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A Thunder academy graduate, Jacob made his first team debut on the wing vs Sheffield Eagles in the Challenge Cup.



News from the Class of 2024

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2024 Luke Dorward (right): Following the new Government's pledge to build 1.5million new homes within the next five years, there is an even bigger need for apprentices in the housebuilding sector. Barratt and David Wilson Homes is supporting this route to success through both its Trade and Degree Apprenticeship Programmes which cover construction, quantity surveying, technical and real estate. Joining the local housebuilder, five apprentices will be making their mark at Barratt's North East division. This includes two Degree Apprentices who will be specialising in Technical & Quantity Surveying departments including 18-year-old Luke Doward, who began his BSc (Hons) in Professional Practice in Technical Design and Management in January. As part of his apprenticeship, Luke will be working closely with internal designers & engineers, urban designers & planners.



Teesside Live

1h · 🌐

Local housebuilder, Barratt and David Wilson Homes North East, is helping five young people k... See more



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Exam Invigilation Approx. £10 per hour.

November/January/May-June.

Contact: lcraggs@whitburncofeacademy.org



2024 Dev Devendran (left): Dev will study Computer Science at Imperial College London in September. He was in touch with Mr Sheard recently having collected his Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award – a fabulous achievement!

Please consider adding us on LinkedIn



2024 Emily Turner: I'm about to start on a year long placement working in a Veterinary Practice as a Student Vet Nurse.

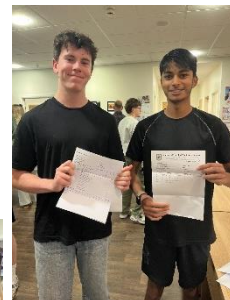
2024 Asli Özgür: In March I attended an international student conference in the Czech Republic. We spent time exploring Prague and Olomouc, where the conference will take place at Palacký University. I really enjoyed the whole experience.



2024 Ryan Dobson: after my A Levels, I worked at XLVets as IT/Tech Support. They were impressed with my work, kept me on when I started uni & promoted me to Junior Software Developer/IT Support.

I've been working on automation of tasks, developing the website, & some database-related work. Over summer, they asked if I would do full time work, which I also gladly accepted! My next project is going to be rewriting the backend API for the company, a huge task which will not only be really interesting for me personally, but also an amazing thing to add to my CV!

We hosted the XLVets AGM in Liverpool (above, right) for ~200 employees from vet practices all around the UK, & I was involved in setting up the activities - including one at The Cavern Club where I had a chance to look around backstage - decorating the venue & some tech setup. This was a really fun experience; my personal favourite highlight was when we had a marching band, the Dizzee Brasscals, led us all to the Cavern Club!



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Alumni News

Success at Whitburn...



whitburnsixthform



@WhitSixthForm

UCAS stats As you can see, *below*, we have prepared over 700 students to go & study at uni! Local Universities & Manchester/York/Leeds dominate for destinations. Top courses for 2025 Entry were: *Mechanical Engineering with 12, Business Management with 6 then Psychology and Computer Science with 5 each.*

UCAS

HEI	2017 Entry	2018 Entry	2019 Entry	2020 Entry	2021 Entry	2022 Entry	2023 Entry	2024 Entry	2025 Firm	TOTAL
Askham Bryan							1	1		1
Aston University, Birmingham							1			1
Cardiff University					1				1	2
Central Lancashire (UCLAN)	1							1		2
City, University of London					1					1
Coventry University							1			1
Cumbria	1		1	1				1		4
Durham University	3	1	1	3	5	1		2	6	22
Edge Hill			1	2						3
Edinburgh Napier			2							2
Essex		1								1
Heriot-Watt, Edinburgh		2	4	2	1		1			10
Hull-York Medical School			1	1						2
Imperial College London		1							1	2
Kings College London	1									1
Kingston University					1					1
Lancaster University	2	2	1			2				7
Leeds Arts University							1			1
Leeds Beckett	7	11	3	1	2	9		3	1	37
Leeds Trinity		1	1	1			1			4
Liverpool Hope			1	1						2
Liverpool John Moores							2	2	1	5
Loughborough	1			1				1		3
Manchester Metropolitan		1	2	4	2	3	1	5		18
New College Durham									1	1
Newcastle College University C	1			1			2			4
Newcastle University	7	8	14	16	9	15	10	16	28	123
Northumbria	6	10	8	20	10	27	20	13	18	132
Norwich University of the Arts	1									1
Nottingham Trent		2		1	2	1				6
Oxford Brookes						1				1
Queen Mary, UoL						1	1			2
Reading			1							1
Sheffield Hallam	2			1	1	1	2	1		8
SOAS						1				1
Strathclyde								1		1
Swansea		1								1

HEI	2017 Entry	2018 Entry	2019 Entry	2020 Entry	2021 Entry	2022 Entry	2023 Entry	2024 Entry	2025 Firm	TOTAL
Teesside University	1	2	1			1	2	1		8
The Northern School of Art						1				1
UCB					3					3
University College London (UCL)					1			1		2
University for the Creative Arts								1	1	1
University of Aberdeen								1	1	1
University of Bath						1				1
University of Birmingham	1				1		1			3
University of Bristol			1	1					2	4
University of Bradford								1	1	2
University of Cambridge		1	1		1	2				5
University of Derby				1						1
University of East Anglia								2		2
University of Edinburgh	1								1	2
University of Exeter				1	2					3
University of Glasgow	2		1	1	2					6
University of Gloucester					1					1
University of Hull	1	2			1					4
University of Kent				1						1
University of Leeds	4	5	2	4	4	3	4	2	5	33
University of Leicester					1		1		1	3
University of Lincoln				1				1		2
University of Liverpool	1			1	3	2			2	9
University of Manchester	4	3		1	6	1		1	2	18
University of Nottingham	2	1	1	1	2		3		1	11
University of Oxford	1				1					2
University of Sheffield		2		3	1	1			3	10
University of St Andrews					2					2
University of Stirling				1			1	1		3
University of Sunderland	9	11	15	14	5	7	15	16	8	100
University of Warwick		1								1
University of Westminster								1		1
University of Winchester					1					1
University of York	1	4	2	2	6	4	5	2		26
UWE, Bristol								1		1
Wolverhampton								1		1
York St John University	2	7		3	1	4	1		4	22
TOTAL	63	80	65	91	75	93	78	77	89	711

2024 Awards Evening

An annual highlight is always our annual Certificate Presentation Evening in December. The **Class of 2024** returned to collect their hard-earned certificates in a ceremony which also featured our Alumni Awards – more on Page 2 about these. 2023 winners **Ellen Wood** and **Mark Brundle** returned to present the Award for Academic Excellence and the Academic Progress Award to **Dev Devendran** and **Tilly Harrison** respectively.



Elliott Hearn, Class of 2019's
2024 Award for Economic Excellence
Awarded to Tyger Emms-Hobbins

Jack Richardson, Class of 2019's
2024 Award for Most Entrepreneurial Student
Awarded to Luke E and Oliver D

Charlotte Grundy, Class of 2022's
2023 Award for Achievement through Adversity
Awarded to Asli Ozgur

As mentioned on Page 2, we would love to present more prizes & awards so if you feel you could sponsor an award in a subject, or other area of Sixth Form life, please get in touch.

A small trophy would cost £20-25 and would be presented annually in your name. We would love to welcome you back to present!



The Vermont Hotel once again hosted us for our Leavers' Do in September

Whitburn CofE Academy Sixth Form



Alumni News

Train to Teach at Whitburn!



whitburnsixthform



@WhitSixthForm

The recruitment crisis in the teaching profession continues to hit the news but despite its challenges, teaching is still a hugely rewarding role. In 2025-26, **Phoebe Rowlings Class of 2020** will become the latest Alumnus to train with us!

We would love to hear from any Alumni considering entering the profession – see the ad below.

Case study: Sam Johnston, Class of 2019

"I'm Sam and I left Whitburn Sixth Form in 2019, having had a wonderful time here as a student, and returned in September 2023 so that I could train to teach here.

I have always wanted to teach, so it was brilliant to be able to come back here to do my Initial Teacher Training. It has been an incredible experience. I have been given brilliant support throughout from the entire History department and from colleagues across the school.

Teaching, as a career, is an incredibly worthwhile one to pursue. It is challenging – but also extremely exciting and rewarding when you see the positive impact that you are able to have on the pupils you teach every time you step into the classroom.

I would absolutely recommend teaching – and training to do so to Whitburn – to anyone and would encourage them to get in touch with the school to discuss it further".

Shortfall in teacher numbers hits 30,000

New figures expose recruitment crisis in secondary and further education - and in subjects government declared a priority



Secondary schools spent £56m on teacher job ads last year, says Labour

Party claims its figures showing 62% rise in advertising spend since 2020 point to growing crisis in teacher recruitment and retention

UK teaching vacancies 'up nearly a quarter since 2015'

Thousands of pupils face being taught by unqualified teachers or in 'super-sized' classrooms as schools struggle to cope with unfilled teacher vacancies

Teachers' pay rise being fought by unions as schools face recruitment crisis

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Teachers' pay rise being fought by unions as schools face recruitment crisis



Rachel Wilson,
Class of 2018.
English ITT 2021-22.
Now permanent staff



Nicholas White,
Class of 2020.
Computer Sci ITT
2023-24.



Sam Johnston,
Class of 2019.
History ITT
2023-24.



Oliver Kelly,
Class of 2018.
History ITT
2024-25.

Whitburn
Church of England
Academy



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for more information



Alumni News



The Sports Page

The third annual **sports awards** organised by the PE department were held in July. Video montages were shown and awards were presented across a huge range of categories reflecting the breadth of the sporting offer here at Whitburn. Sixth Form was well represented with **George Bowen, Class of 2025** winning 'Volunteer of the Year' and **Sophia Lee 2025** winning 'Lifetime Achievement'. Several Alumni received nominations and collected DofE Awards on the night also.



You may remember reading in last year's newsletter that **Trudy Johnson, Class of 2025** was awarded 'Outstanding Achievement' at the 2024 Sport Awards. Well, she certainly justified this award by being selected to represent England Women U19s at the Cricket World Cup in Malaysia in January 2025. Trudy excelled in a group match versus USA posting excellent figures with both bat and ball. How amazing to see a Whitburn student on the TV with the 'Sky Sports Main Event Live' logo just above their heads! Trudy has earned a professional playing contract with Durham women's team.

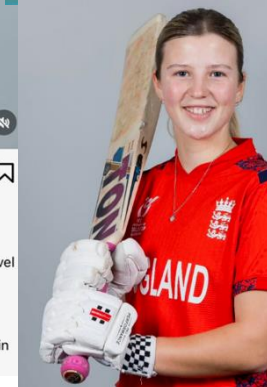


NEW
Share a thought with friends...

Liked by whitburncofeacademyart and others
whitburnpedept 🇬🇧 Johnson 🇬🇧

Good Luck to our very own @whitburnsixthform A Level PE student @trudyjohnson_ at the U19 Women's Cricket World Cup!

First game for England in the early hours of Saturday morning and hopefully Trudy's first time on the pitch in an England shirt! 🇬🇧 🏏



ENGLAND WOMEN UNDER-19						
BOWLING						
	O	M	R	W	ECO	
Tilly Corteen-Coleman	4	0	25	1	6.25	
Olivia Brinsden	2	0	22	0	11.00	
Phoebe Brett	4	0	22	0	5.50	
Prisha Thanawala	4	0	20	2	5.00	
Trudy Johnson	4	0	17	2	4.25	

ENGLAND WOMEN UNDER-19						
BATTING						
	R	B	4S	6S	S/R	
Davina Perrin c R Singh b P Shah	74	45	9	3	164.44	✓
Erin Thomas c D Chingra b M Madhavan	0	1	0	0	0	✓
Trudy Johnson not out	44	39	5	0	112.82	✓
	1	1	0	0	100	✓



Alumni News

Annual Events!



2018 Malawi



2019 Eswatini (was Swaziland)



2022 Nepal



2023 Cambodia



2024 Borneo



2020 Cambodia (COVID Cancellations)
2021 Thailand
2025 Malaysia **2027 Vietnam**

World Challenge: Mr Craggs accompanied 9 students to Borneo last summer to assist at a sea turtle conservation project, visit an Orang-Utan sanctuary and do some jungle trekking. He goes to Western Malaysia this summer with a different group on a Mangrove Forest conservation project.



Student Presidents

- 2015-16 Chloe Manuel & Chris Williams
- 2016-17 Dom Corr & Mel Owens
- 2017-18 Sam Johnston & Eleanor Reay
- 2018-19 Alice Casey & Matthew Appleby
- 2019-20 Patrick Allen & Cameron Chilton
- 2020-21 Anna Tobin & Louie Scott
- 2021-22 Alex Walton & Robert Adamson
- 2022-23 Tyger Emms-Hobbins & Adam Gibson
- 2023-24 Claudia Cook & John Wright



University Challenge: Our annual quiz competition continues to be popular and it is great to see siblings feature in these winners shots from (top-bottom) 2016,17,18,19,21,22,23, 24. Very bottom: Matterson College, our 2025 Winners.



Alumni News

The Back Page!



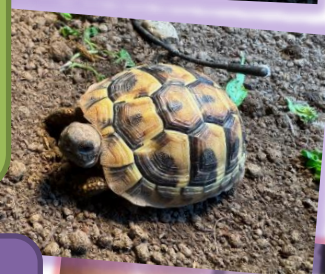
whitburnsixthform



@WhitSixthForm

In Animal News...

The swans on the pond by Testos roundabout/Clarion hotel welcomed five fluffy cygnets this Spring. Biologist Mr Craggs enjoys seeing them on the daily commute! Mrs Thomas has introduced a school tortoise, Trevor-Pearl this year. It resides in lab 15 and is a star attraction. She brings him out for fire evacuations in a small carrier! On the school site we have foxes, pheasants and the ever-persistent seagulls which try to get into the sixth form building. No sightings of 'Sixth Form cat' for a while though...



Never forget!!

We are proud that students report in leavers' surveys that they enjoyed their time with us. But which alumnus opted for a more permanent reminder whilst on a lads' holiday....



Don't send cards or grapes!

No need to send cards or bunches of grapes. Mr Craggs' bandages are all part of reaccreditation of a First Aid at Work certificate! Mr Moore joined Mr Craggs and Miss Manning in being trained this year.

Creative gift for Ms Dickenson:

Those Alumni who have studied 'The Handmaid's Tale' with Ms Dickenson will no doubt be impressed by the gift she received from one of this years' leavers, Lucy. A 'hand-made handmaid' if you like. Lucy's mum made it!



Left, Sonia with one of her Enrichment groups in 2020. Sonia has led courses for us for 10 years!

Staff leavers 2025:

Mr Clougher, Business & Economics
(Early Retirement)
Mrs Maughan, English (Promotion/New Job,
English Martyrs Hartlepool)
Sonia McAndrew, British Sign Language
Enrichment Tutor (Retirement)



Stay in touch – please opt in!

Under data protection rules, we need your permission to store your email address & send you these bulletins.

[Please update your details here](#) and also tell us if you have changed apprenticeship/job/ /course/uni since you left us.

Which member of staff do you think is most likely to survive the Hunger Games?



1.Mr Sheard
2.Mr Moore
3.Mr Leggett

Who has been your favourite member of staff during your time in Sixth Form?



1.Miss Charles
2.Mr Shaw
3.Miss Boswell

Student
Awards 2025