



Belmont Community School

December 2015

Christmas Wishes from Belmont

We have ended the year with another fantastic pantomime. Thank you to everyone who came to see the performance. A massive well done to the students, ex-students, staff, Friends of Belmont and Governors who's hard work made the performance possible. We look forward to seeing you at the Summer Show Guys and Dolls.

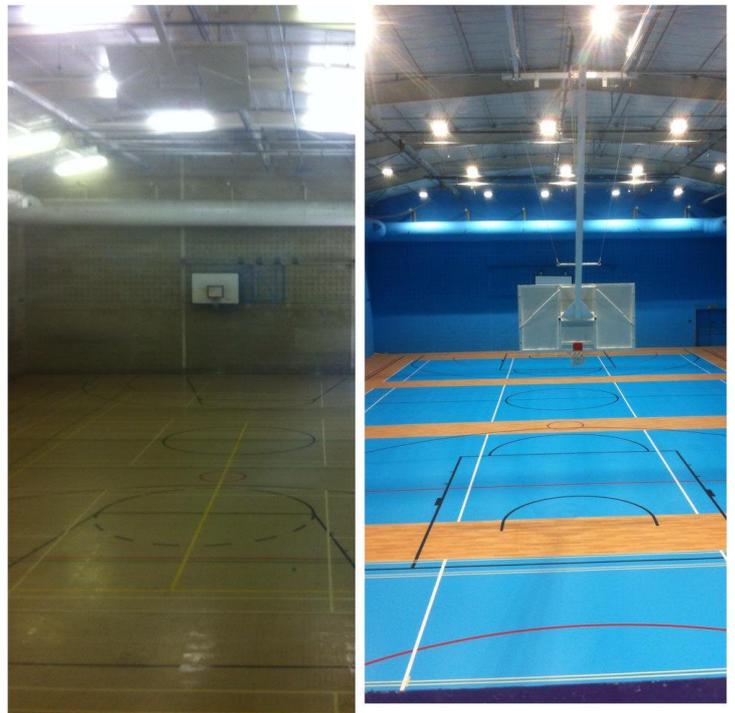


Sports Hall Transformation is now complete.

Following Badminton England's grant of £78,000 the newly refurbished sports hall has already become a firm favourite with our students, Durham County Badminton Association, Durham Swifts and Durham University as the new centre for excellence for Badminton in County Durham.

These before and after pictures show how fantastic the transformation has been.

The sports hall now has four courts, state-of-the-art lighting and flooring that is being enjoyed by students and members of the public alike. Students at Belmont have already seen success in county tournaments and are now attending the youth talent camps hosted by the county association.



Dukeshouse Wood

As part of year 10 Triple Science students had the opportunity to visit Dukeshouse Wood in Hexham. Student Ellie Brown gave this account of the visit:

“The science activities we did were: Nature walk, soil analysis, accuracy and precision with Archery, abseiling and the effects of adrenaline on the body doing the Leap of Faith . The trip also helped us with team building and survival skills such as bush craft and building fires.

When we were on the three hour Nature Walk we studied the woodland habitat, different trees and things that affect the environment. We also learned about how the trees grow and the life expectancy of certain trees. The Redwood tree, pictured here, was the one that we looked at the most. They grew to enormous heights and had a soft fur on the bark, they were expected to live for up to 2000 years. They were also known as ‘The Lord's Trees’ as the Lord of Northumberland's forest was full of them. They originated from California but were somehow brought to the UK.



We did the team challenge that involved us working together to get a range of physical tasks completed.



The bush craft involved building fires and shelters that we could sleep in overnight if we ever ended up in that situation. We used cotton wool with a flint and steel to light the fire. We had a competition to see who could build the best shelter and fire. The group leaders won! “



Premier League Girls Football

Girls football is really taking off at Belmont. Our girls teams were invited to enter a Premier League Girls Tournament organised by Sunderland AFC, hosted by GOALS football centre at Sunderland. Charlotte Cooke and Neave Laverick gave us this report:

“The team comprised of year 9,10 and 11 girls. Becky Bones (Lumley Ladies U14, Durham PDC) Charlotte Cooke (Lumley Ladies U14) Emma Dunn (Lumley Ladies U16) Neave Laverick (Framwellgate U15, Durham County Schools) Savannah Lloyd (Durham Harriers) Kaitlyn Richardson (Lumley Ladies U17) Katherine Young and Rebecca Young (Lumley Ladies U16).

Eight schools entered teams with two of them entering an A and B team. Belmont played St Bedes, Peterlee, Harton Technical College, Shotton Hall and Monkwearmouth B. All of the games were closely fought and Belmont girls played some brilliant football, the lack of a specialist keeper did make a difference, and the team were unlucky not to get through to the final stages.

Well done to all of the girls for having a great team spirit and getting out there and doing well.

Thanks to Lumley Ladies for releasing so many girls, to SAFC for organising it, to GOALS for hosting it, Mr Marsden for supporting it and Mr Laverick and Mr Colledge for making it happen”.



Shakespeare Festival

On Wednesday 25th November the year 10 GCSE Performing Arts went north to take part in the Schools Shakespeare Festival at Whitley Bay Playhouse. They had been set the challenge of performing an abridged version of William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. The play is set in Padua where Baptista Minola will not let his younger daughter Bianca marry until his older daughter Katherine is married. Katherine is known as a shrew and is very hot tempered. Along comes Petruchio who agrees to marry Katherine and 'tame' her.

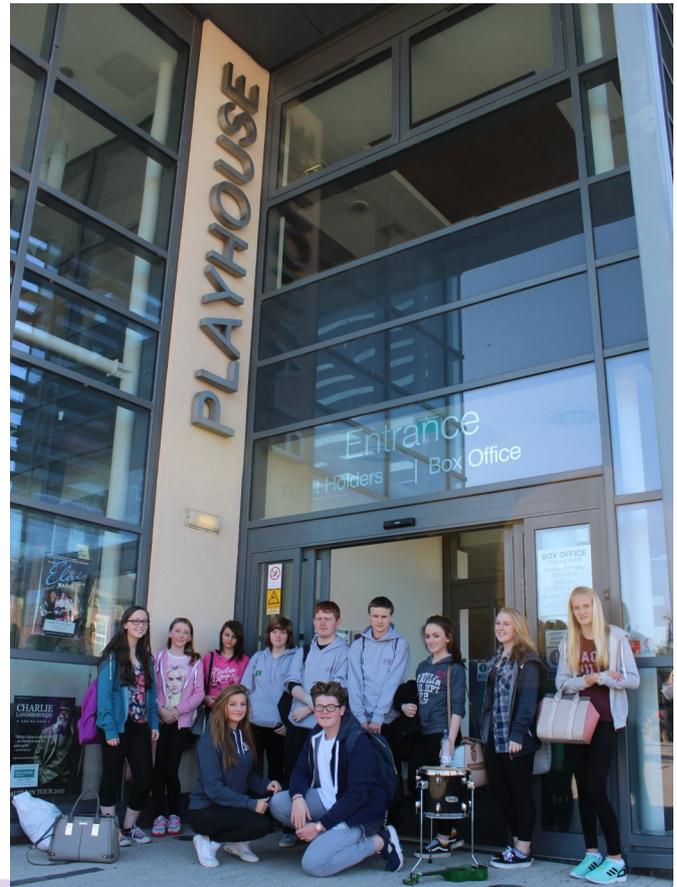
The year 10 students had to get to grips with the Shakespearean language, learn all their lines, organise their costumes, props, sound and lighting needs. They decided to set it in modern day and used modern music to enhance the entrances and exits.

Overall Mrs Cooper was very impressed with the teamwork and determination to improve shown by all students.

Well done to Travis Ross (Petruchio), Katie Hirst (Katherine), Jake Brown (Priest/ Tailor), Katrina Mould (Tranio), Lily Fisher (Lucentio), Niamh Gallagher (Gremio), Jessica Graham (Hortensio), Megan Lewis (Bianca), Emily Murray (Baptista) and Alexis Gillett (Servant).

The group also gained their Grade 6 Examination Plays in Production certificate, the examiner commented it was a credit to this ensemble that the performers playing both the larger and smaller roles had equal presence in this piece.

This production was visually sharp and uncluttered. There was elegance in the stage pictures created, for example, the men gathered around the table for the wager at the end of the play. Petruchio arriving from the back of the auditorium for the wedding was a moment of real surprise, both for the audience and the characters on stage. Breaking the fourth wall in this way enhanced the sense of anarchy and breaking of protocols that Petruchio desired. The audience enjoyed the effect immensely.



E-safety

E-safety is vital in today's society. It is a key part of our curriculum and to help parents we have put together this information we have gathered from parentinfo.org.

The internet is a wonderful resource for young people and offers unprecedented opportunities for connecting and learning. But it can also be scary. Many parents are afraid their children will be exposed to upsetting content or meet dangerous people online. What are the facts about online risk?

Risk vs harm

First, it's important to know the difference between **risk** and **harm**. The two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, but there is a clear distinction. When we talk about risk, we mean the *possibility* that something negative or dangerous will happen. Harm, of course, refers to actual damage or trauma. Here are a few common online safety myths, along with the truth about each one – and some tips on using that information to help your children stay safe.

Myth: Adults who want to harm children target them by pretending to be young people themselves.

Fact: This can be the case, but according to the Crimes Against Children Research Centre, most online offenders admit they are older before trying to convince their victims to meet in person or engage in sexual activity online. They typically rely on flattery and young people's normal interest in sex and relationships to target children, not solely on deception about their age.

What can you do?

Make sure your children know that adults who want to talk about sex online are breaking the law – it's illegal for an adult to send sexual messages to a child – and should always be avoided. Discuss the risks involved in sending revealing images or using webcams, which can always be recorded. And talk to them about the risks of meeting up with online-only friends in real life. Encourage them to talk to you if they are ever worried about anything that happens online. Show them how to report abuse to CEOP, if anyone online ever makes them feel uncomfortable.

Myth: Online child sex offenders typically target very young children.

Fact: Offenders typically target children they think will be vulnerable, so many try to connect with teenagers who are open to talking about sex. Some do specifically target young children (especially young children who are very active online), so it's important to talk to children of all ages about using the internet safely. The fact is, though, it's teens who are most vulnerable to exploitation online.

What can you do?

Try not to frighten your young children too much. It's important to talk to them about staying safe online – make sure they know what is and isn't OK to share, for example – but overstating the risks may make them unduly worried. Try to emphasise boundaries and what is and isn't appropriate to discuss with friends online.

Myth: Sharing personal information online is never safe.

Fact: It's difficult to interact online without sharing any personal details. Popular social networking sites and email services all require some amount of personal information to get started. The important thing is to ensure that young people are using the right privacy settings.

What can you do?

Encourage your children to think carefully about all the information they share – why do they need to provide it? Who can see it? Warn them about the riskiest types of online interaction, such as talking to people they have never met face-to-face, talking about sex with strangers, sharing revealing images or posting their phone number publicly.

Myth: Social media is too risky and should be for adults and older teens only.

Fact: 'Social media' is a broad term referring to a wide range of platforms for connecting and communicating online. Some are safer than others, but they all involve a certain amount of risk – and many incorporate tools for preventing harm, like reporting functions, privacy settings and moderators who remove inappropriate content. Many young people use social media safely and productively.

What can you do?

Talk to your child about privacy settings and responsible use of social media. Before they set up their first account, you might want to read over the privacy information together and talk about what tools make sense to use. For instance, they could set all their posts to be visible to friends only. You should also look at the terms and conditions on user age – some sites and apps require users to be over 13, 16 or even 18.

Myth: Most children have been exposed to sexual images online.

Fact: According to research from the London School of Economics, around one in seven children reported seeing sexual images online in the past year.⁴

What can you do?

Don't assume your children are being bombarded with sexual images every time they go online, but make sure they know what they can do if they do come across something inappropriate.

Myth: Putting your family computer in a shared room will help you manage your children's internet use and make it easier to keep them safe.

Fact: This may have been true at one point, but unfortunately it's not so simple any more. In the age of smartphones, tablets and other portable devices, young people can access the internet just about anywhere. And even if they don't personally have a smartphone, they could go online using someone else's device or at a friend's house.

What can you do?

Rather than trying to control everything your child sees, focus on building their resilience. The more confident and knowledgeable they are, the more likely it is that they'll be able to deal with any risks they encounter online. Try looking at age-appropriate resources like the CEOP Thinkuknow website together to make sure they're clued up.

For more information, please visit parentinfo.org and/or parentzone.org.uk (links on school website)

New Football Kit

Our school football teams are looking very smart this year courtesy of our local supply agency Teaching Personnel.

Paul Morgan, Branch Manager, offered to kit out the school's football teams with personalised football shirts, shorts and even socks.

Chris Gent, also from Teaching Personnel, accompanied Paul when they delivered the kits to students ahead of a match, bringing with them post match refreshments for the players which went down very well !



Duke of Edinburgh Award

School have now secured the operating licence to run the Duke of Edinburgh award in house. Mr Marsden took the popular decision early in the term. Mr Marsden said "We fully intend this award to carry on into the far reaching future led by school staff alongside the support of Youth Service staff. I fully support the award as it develops a different set of skills and qualities and is internationally recognised as the gold standard".

Currently there are expected to be more than 35 students signed up for Bronze award and several students moving on to Silver. Belmont Community School governors, staff and parents recognise that the award has life changing potential. Accompanying good GCSE results it gives students a huge boost in employability.

Changes within the County structure now mean that school is supported directly by head office staff, namely Marcia Holmes, Operations Officer, North East. Marcia said "I have been into school several times since September, training staff and ensuring the quality standard will be met. I am extremely happy with the schools plans for the award and look forward to seeing the progress students make"

Future Business Magnates 2016.

Top Secret Idea!

Belmont Community School Future Business Magnates 2016 team attended the Challenge Two event 'Researching a Business Idea' at the Sjevoll Centre on Monday 30th November. They received deserved praise from the staff leading the event for the innovative ideas they generated together during the challenge fitting into the competitions theme this year 'The House County Durham Built'.

This year's theme will see our team with the help of our business partner, Waterstons, researching and developing their most viable concept into an innovative product for the home to be manufactured in County Durham. We haven't quite chosen our final idea yet but the competition leaders from Challenge Two helped us decide on our best idea so far.... this was concealed in a Top Secret envelop as we left the Sjevoll Centre.



MammalWeb:

Student led community outreach for camera trap ecology

Belmont School Science Club are very excited to have the opportunity to work with Pen-Yuan Hsing, a PhD researcher from Durham University.

MammalWeb (www.MammalWeb.org) is a collaboration between Durham University and Durham Wildlife Trust to create a web platform to crowdsource the identification of wild mammals from camera trap photos in and around the local area.

During the first term Science Club will actively learn about the basics of ecology, setting up camera traps to monitor nearby wild animals and uploading photos to MammalWeb whilst contributing text and multimedia to MammalWeb's "Learn" page. Then, later in the academic year, the students will develop and conduct their own outreach projects within the community such as developing DIY camera trap kits, presenting at community events or developing a travelling exhibit.

This is a fantastic opportunity for our students to be involved in real science beyond the classroom.



Belmont takes part in Lumiere

15 of our students were lucky enough to appear in Durham's Lumiere Festival as part of Asalto Productions Viaduct transformation.

Students and youth work staff went to St Leonards school where they were filmed crawling along a green floor. The end product was projected onto the viaduct where students appeared to slowly climb up the walls. The illusion was brilliant.



Sage Performance

Two of our brass students, Annabell Frewin-Wood and Kimberley Scott took part in a workshops and concert performance at the Sage recently. The girls, both year 8, also performed to a packed audience as part of the whole workshop band performance. The girls are pictured here with Annabell's sister Emily, a Bowburn student who will be joining Belmont in September, received tuition from Yamaha Neo Brass ensemble member George Thackray. They did amazingly well, coping with very tricky music and performing really confidently in the band.



Learning about Gaming

40 of our year 10 GCSE Computing students visited Newcastle University and The Life Centre recently. Their visit to Newcastle University included a computing unplugged session where they learned about computer science without a computer, followed by a tour of the games lab where they met with some university lecturers and students from all over the world completing their masters degrees in computing. They then went on to visit the Game On exhibition at The Life Centre. This gave students the opportunity to explore the history, culture and future of gaming. They were able to try out over 100 playable games from Pac-man and Pokémon to virtual reality and 3D, experience the 4D animation ride (which included rain and snow), and visit the planetarium to learn about the Hubble telescope. This was a fantastic experience for all those who took part.



Poetry Competition Winner

We are very proud of Alice Robson, Emily Bainbridge and Cameron Tait who were winner and runners up respectively in a schools competition to create a poem for Durham Cathedral's Festival of Remembrance concert in November. Alice's winning poem, The Return, was written from the perspective of a child whose dad had returned from war. Alice read her poem in front of hundreds of people in Durham Cathedral on Saturday 7th November. Governor Lynne Hirst was at the service and commented that Alice was "a credit to the school. It was a beautiful, well written poem, read by a very confident young lady who was clear and precise".



Friends of Belmont

Friends of Belmont wish to thank all of those who supported this year's Christmas Fair, it was a great success.

We are now planning the Easter Fair, which will take place on Saturday 19th March. If you would like a table please contact school via phone or email (school@belmontschool.org.uk).

We would also make a plea to any parents who work for companies who participate in match funding to contact us, companies which participate include: Santander, Alliance & Leicester, Asda, BAA, Bank of England, BP, BT, Camelot, Cornhill Insurance PLC, Debenhams, DHC, HBSC, Sainsbury, Kellogg's, Kingfisher, Littlewoods, M&S, NatWest group, Norwich Union, Peugeot Motor Company, Royal Bank of Scotland, Royal London Mutual Insurance, Stage-coach, Tesco, Woolwich PLC, American Express, Anglian Water, Argos, Bank of America, Bank of Scotland and Centrica.

Everyone is welcome to join Friends of Belmont no matter how much time you have to spare. It isn't necessary that you attend every event, or every meeting. We realise time is valuable and appreciate input from everyone no matter how small.

If you would like further information please phone the school or email us at school@belmontschool.org.uk.



**Our students, staff and governors would like to wish you a Happy Christmas.
School re-opens to students on Tuesday 5th December 2016**

