



Spring
2010

Friends of BRGS

A newsletter produced by BRGS
for former students, parents and
the community

Bacup & Rawtenstall
Grammar School

ISSUE
20



Harry Bibring with Year 9 students and print work prepared for Holocaust Memorial Week

Holocaust Survivor, Harry Bibring, gave a moving talk to Year 9 students about his experiences growing up in Austria in a Jewish family. Harry was born in Vienna in 1925 and he enjoyed ice-skating, learning about mechanics and spending time with his sister, Gerta.

Holocaust Survivor's Story

In November 1938, Harry's father's clothing shop was looted and destroyed during *Kristallnacht* and he was arrested soon after. Harry's family were forced to leave their flat and live in a house together with 50 other Jewish women and children. After his father was released from prison, the family intended to flee to Shanghai but his father was robbed on his way to pay for the tickets. Fearing for the safety of their children, Harry's parents arranged for him and his sister to flee to the United Kingdom on a *Kindertransport* train. The plan was for them to be sponsored by a family friend and for Harry's parents to join them as soon as they could but sadly, in November 1940 his father died of a heart attack and his mother was deported to the death camp at Sobibor in Poland in 1942. Harry went to school in London until the advent of the war, when he was evacuated to the country. On his 14th birthday, he had to return

to London, where he worked in his sponsor's clothing store. He later moved out of his sponsor's house and found work as a mechanic's apprentice until the end of the war.

In May 1945 Harry met his wife-to-be and they married two years later. He went to night school in order to become a professional engineer. During this time he and his wife had a son. By 1958 Harry had three degrees and worked as an engineer, later teaching engineering until he retired in 1991.

Year 9 students asked some insightful questions and history teacher, Margaret Stanley said: *"Harry was delighted with the response he received from the students. They were moved by his talk and thoroughly enjoyed it. It was a very rewarding afternoon for all involved."*

Welcome

This 'Friends of BRGS' brings news from our Spring Term which had a disrupted start with the heavy January snowfall and icy conditions. After nearly a week in which we were unable to access school, eventually we returned just in time for the start of the first public examinations. Our return was due to the sterling efforts of our maintenance team clearing mountains of snow and ensuring the safety of walkways around BRGS.

Included in this edition is feedback from a survey sent to parents who rated BRGS as outstanding. We are delighted by this response and encourage open communication with parents, working in partnership to ensure that we provide the best possible education for your children.

We are excited that after a number of years, our building programme is due to start after planning permission was finally granted for a new classroom block.

I would like to draw your attention to a forthcoming alumni reception for all former students who either have established careers or would like to pursue a career in the field of the arts. The reception is on Thursday 13th May and further details are available in this newsletter.

Thank you to the many readers who have elected to receive this newsletter by email. If you would like to be added to this expanding list then please do get in touch.

With all best wishes,

Emma

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Challenging our Emerging Entrepreneurs

Our LionHeart Challenge has become an annual fixture in the school calendar, with all Year 10 students spending a day off timetable to develop their business enterprise skills. Students worked in teams of 10 to put together a business plan and design a product which would ensure personal safety. Teams were under significant pressure to meet deadlines, put together budgets and prepare marketing strategies for their proposed products.

The students had to exhibit strong team working skills and present their business case to a panel in a format which resembled the TV programme *Dragon's Den*.

The winning team showed its creativity by proposing a product called *glowsafe*, personal hair products and washing materials which reflect when in car headlights! The team will now go on to represent the school in the regional heat during the summer term.



The Lion Heart Challenge winning team along with Karin Kolbuck, Head of Year and Judges, Heather and Geoffrey Skilling

Congratulations go to the team of: Georgina Lucas, Hazel Ramsell, Lucy Watkins, Jack Westerman, Demi Hartley, David Hill, Tom Mallinson, Daniel Devine, Lauren Coatman and Max Lake.

Approval Granted for New Classrooms

County Councillors on the Lancashire Development Control Committee voted unanimously in favour of a new classroom block being built at BRGS.

The six classroom block is set to replace all the temporary classrooms on the school site and to provide modern facilities which are fit for teaching and learning. The building is to be located next to the Sports Hall at the top of Mount Avenue and it will house our English Faculty. To limit the impact of the building it incorporates a sedum roof and there will be significant landscaping.

Approval of this application is part of a larger approved scheme at BRGS which will provide the school with a Performing Arts facility in front of the Clark Building, improved parking with the conversion of

the tennis courts at the front of the school, and a second all-weather pitch which will be shared with the relocated Waterfoot Primary School. Work on all of these schemes is due to start over the next couple of months and the classroom block is expected to be a twelve month build.

In partnership with Lancashire County Council, BRGS is seeking to address its 28% shortfall in teaching space to accommodate our existing, fixed student intake. It is with a huge sense of relief and excitement that we anticipate significant building development and the overall improvement in much needed facilities getting underway in 2010. We are hopeful that we will meet our shortfall in space by the time we celebrate BRGS's Centenary in 2013!

In December, Year 7 history students had a privileged insight into life as a Roman by viewing replica Roman artifacts and seeing a Centurion's typical attire. The students also watched the visitors enact a Roman battle.



The Romans came, saw and conquered

Helping Haiti

In response to the tragic earthquake in Haiti, the Headmaster, Marc Morris, set a challenge to students that he would undertake his own fundraising and commit to match the funds raised by the whole school. Each form held their own fundraising events and highlights included 8R hosting a Bad Hair Day during which some horrendous hairstyles were spotted and another initiative was to wear geeky socks and funky ties.

Two students in the sixth form, Brad James and Tom Sech, selected an incredibly cold and rainy day for a sponsored walk to school from Bury – a distance of approximately 17 miles. They arrived in school at around morning break, windswept and drenched but managed to seek sponsorship from over 500 people.

The school as a whole has raised in excess of £2,000 towards UNICEF's Haiti Appeal.



Form 8R organise a Bad Hair Day

Calling all Creative Former Students

On Thursday 13th May we will be hosting an Arts Alumni Reception at school for former students who are working in the Arts in the broadest sense of the word. So if you are an established or budding musician, artist, actor, dancer, graphic or fashion designer or perhaps you would like to work in the sphere of film or media studies then please do put the date in your diary.

We have run similar professional networking events in the past and have attracted many former students ranging from established and retired professionals, who are able to share their insight and expertise, to university students who are eager to develop their careers. We shall also be inviting existing students who are ambitious to develop their creative talents

and who will be seeking your guidance.

If you are interested in receiving further details about this evening reception then please do contact Emma Gauntlett at ecg@brgs.org.uk or on 01706 234500.

Parents Rate BRGS as Outstanding!

All parents of BRGS students were invited to complete a parental survey to canvas their views on BRGS. The survey was conducted by the independent marketing company, Kirkland Rowell, and the resulting report based on the perceptions of the 270 completed questionnaires rated the school as outstanding in seven out of the eight main categories:

- Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils
- The quality of teaching
- The use of assessment to support learning
- The extent the curriculum meets pupils' needs and progress
- The effectiveness of care, guidance and support
- The promotion of equal opportunity and tackling of discrimination
- The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures

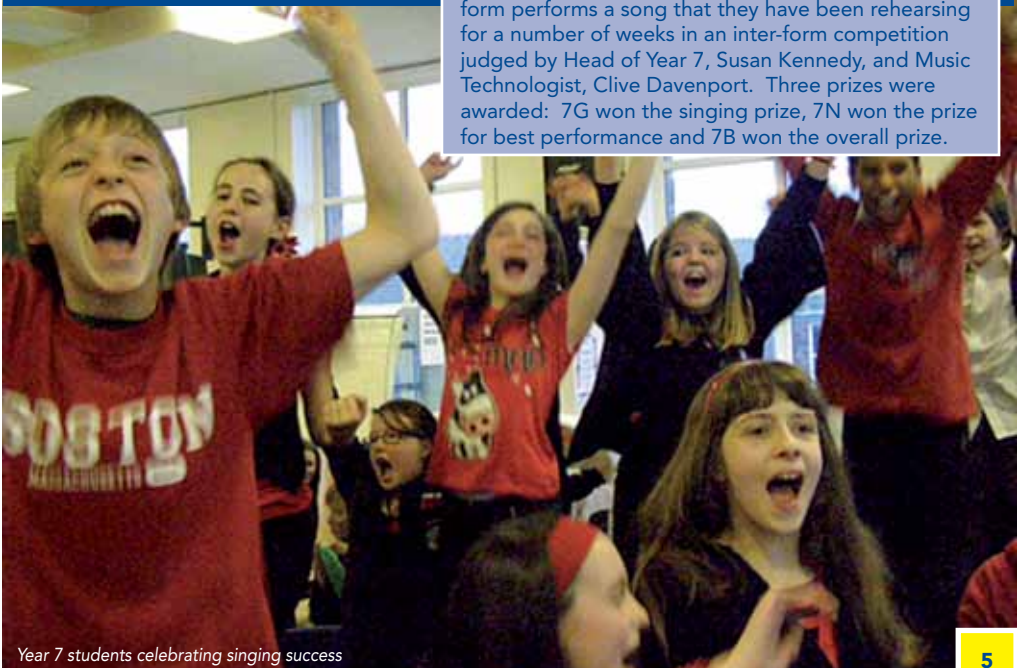
The only category which was rated as 'good' was 'The school's capacity for sustained improvement.'

With regard to academic subjects, parents said that they are most happy with the delivery of ICT, Music and Citizenship and with regard to non-academic areas, parents are most happy with the delivery of school communication, exam results and developing students' potential. Parents feel that their top priority for improvement is Careers Advice.

Further analysis from the questionnaires will appear on the school website in due course.

The Big Sing

The Big Sing is an annual event in which each Year 7 form performs a song that they have been rehearsing for a number of weeks in an inter-form competition judged by Head of Year 7, Susan Kennedy, and Music Technologist, Clive Davenport. Three prizes were awarded: 7G won the singing prize, 7N won the prize for best performance and 7B won the overall prize.



Year 7 students celebrating singing success

Burnley Football Club Experience

The manager at the time, Owen Coyle, and a first team player were both present during the session. The objective was for students to learn a few football skills and meet some of their sporting heroes. There was also the chance for a Question and Answer Session with the manager and player as well as plenty of time for photographs and autographs.

We are grateful to John Stanworth, Barclays Commercial Director for Lancashire, for this wonderful opportunity. The chosen students came back with many stories to tell and some wonderful memories.

At the end of the autumn term, a group of students chosen from Years 7 to 10 enjoyed a fantastic opportunity to take part in a Burnley Football Club training session organised by Barclays Bank, sponsors of the Premiership side.



Tree Appeal

BRGS was donated eighty trees paid for by the Bolton based Premex Group through a scheme called *Tree Appeal* and further trees were provided by the Woodland Trust. Students and staff made the most of a sunny day to plant the trees as part of the volunteering section of the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

In previous weeks the students had prepared the site by removing unwanted ash trees and building a hedge of cut branches to keep out sheep to ensure that the new trees have time to establish themselves. David Archer, Head of Science and the teacher responsible for leading the project,

said: "Removing some of the ash trees has opened up the area to let in more light. We have planted a mixture of native trees including crab apple, cherry, dogwood, hazel and blackthorn. As they grow they should bring more colour and variety to our woodland garden. We are very grateful for the donation of these trees by Premex."

At the same time as the tree planting, another team of students were busy focusing their efforts on the land at the top of Mount Avenue next to the school's Sports Hall where they were preparing the ground for a small wildflower meadow.

Tree Appeal has now supplied tens of thousands of trees to over 400 UK schools for free.



The Technology of Flight

Year 9 students enjoyed a trip to the Rossendale Air Training Corps to round off their studies about flight. The students were able to experience flying an RAF training aircraft on the cadet's group simulator as well as participating in a knowledge-based quiz which was won by Asanish Kalyanasundaram. The visit was organised by Jonathan Fitton, Technology teacher and the school would like to thank Flight Lieutenant Jackson and his team for providing a wonderful event.

Law Students take Manchester Crown Court by Storm

A group of 15 law students from Years 12 and 13 took part in the Regional Heats of the National Bar Mock Trial Competition on Saturday 21st November 2009 at the Manchester Crown Court.



Our barristers wore the traditional wigs and gowns and used their excellent advocacy skills to prosecute and defend two cases before a real judge.

The first case of R v Myers involved a charge of Possessing Drugs with Intent to Supply and in both trials the barristers (Alex Jones, Lewis Brady) and witnesses (Alex Eaves and Matthew Archibold) managed to secure the preferred verdict from the Jury.

The second case of R v Kerrie involved a Robbery on a bus and the barristers (Alison Stonebanks and Grace Rutherford) displayed excellent skills in cross examining the witnesses (Laura-Beth Thompson and Georgina O'Brien).

Oliver Sikora played the role of Court Clerk and Usher for the cases which involved him assisting the judge with witnesses and jurors.

The remaining students: Rosie O'Gorman, Joanna Haworth, Faiza Saeed, Jason Ngan, Hannah Jones and Ayisha Ali played an integral part in each trial as Jurors.

A great time was had by all and the law department is looking forward to taking part in the competition next year.



Snow closes BRGS

Like the rest of the country, BRGS was affected by the heavy snowfall in January. Our precarious position at the top of an icy steep slope and located off minor roads ensured that accessibility to the school was far from easy during the Arctic conditions! Our maintenance team used all available salt and machinery to allow us to reopen in time for the start of the public examinations after a four day enforced break from school.



Preparing the school site after the snow

Artist in Residence

One of Lancashire's most accomplished artists, Ian Murphy, visited BRGS as part of a two-day artist in residence workshop which allowed Year 12 students to view some of Ian's beautiful architectural pieces.

Ian is a fine art artist who uses a variety of drawing, printing and painting techniques to produce large bold canvases

exploring the theme of landscape. Ian says: "My response to any environment is to produce a painting that captures not only the physical qualities that are present, but the spiritual and atmospheric ones as well. This is why some of my images are quite large in scale, dominating the viewer."



Ian talked about his experience and influences, delivered a masterclass on colour theory and taught the students the various techniques he regularly employs. The workshop was a resounding success and the work which has been inspired as a result of Ian's visit will be shown in a forthcoming exhibition.

Senior Speech Night

Guest of honour at our Senior Speech Night to award A Level certificates and sixth form prizes was former student Commander Clive Murgatroyd MBE RN (1967-1974).

Clive joined the Royal Navy in 1974 and after studying for an Honours degree in Physical Oceanography at the University of Liverpool he trained as a Fighter Controller, subsequently becoming a Principal Warfare Officer specialising in Surface Warfare and Anti-Air Warfare. His time at sea was spent principally on operational tours in the South Atlantic and Arabian Gulf and whilst at the Maritime Warfare Centre he was principal author and editor of the third edition of British Maritime Doctrine. Clive's last appointment in the Navy was as the leader of the Surface Effects and Self Defence Capability Planning

Group in the Ministry of Defence and as Chairman of NATO's Maritime Capability Group 1 on Above Water Engagement.

After retiring from the Navy in 2008, Clive decided to pursue his lifetime interests in sustainability and the impacts of climate change, initially through a Master's degree at Kingston University and he is now at the Centre for Defence Acquisition at Cranfield University. As well as reflecting on his time at BRGS and the many musical activities he participated in, much of the focus of his engaging speech was on our environmental impact and how the students seated in the hall could help to minimise that impact as stewards of the planet as they progress through their lives.

During the Year 8 cross-curricular week focusing on China, students were awarded merits for particularly good work and 15 students who gained the most merits were selected to go on a special trip to the Wai Yin Community Centre in Manchester in recognition of their efforts. Whilst at the centre, they participated in Tai Chi, Table Tennis and Mah Jong sessions as well as being treated to a traditional lunch.

Wai Yin Community Centre



Sports Reports

British Schools' Orienteering Championships

The 2009 British Schools' Orienteering Championships took place at Druridge Bay Country Park, in Northumberland. Over 1000 pupils from schools around the country made the journey to enjoy a weekend packed full of fun and orienteering.

Despite the threat of continued downpours the weather held for most of the day and everybody was in great spirits. Many of the courses made use of the coastal sand dunes which proved very tricky for some of our younger orienteers!

The training event on Saturday was based at the Woodhorn Mining Museum and after some high intensity training in the country park the squad were able to see round this fascinating centre for the history of the mining industry.



A top performance in the Championships came from Sophie Horrocks who was lying in 3rd place for most of the competition but was sadly knocked out of the top three towards the end of the day. Paul Burdekin did well to finish 10th in his group and the BRGS team lost out on the overall Bronze medal by just one point to Aboyne Academy.

Our overall performance was not as good as it has been in previous years but we have a young, enthusiastic squad and this year's experience will stand them in good stead in next year's major events.

Our congratulations to Connie Briggs who won the Senior British Challenge Cup in Gymnastics.

Connie trains at Heywood Sparks Gymnastic Academy and travelled to Aldershot to produce a fantastic performance and to take the top prize. The competition started with the Vault, and a Tsukahara scored 12.85 winning her the silver medal. Connie won another silver medal on the Bars and then she moved on to the four-inch wide Balance Beam where she executed another perfect performance and won a gold. She performed two double back somersaults for the first time in her Floor routine and won a gold giving her the overall title. Her total score of 46.35 qualifies her to compete in the Senior British Championships in July 2010, alongside world Champion, Beth Tweddle.

Sam Minihan, Year 11, has been offered a two year youth team scholarship with Rochdale AFC.

He has been at Rochdale Centre of Excellence since he was six and the post is the culmination of a number of years of dedication to the sport. Sam said: "This is an amazing opportunity for me and I hope to fulfil my dreams of becoming a professional footballer. This would not have been possible without the support of my family, school and my friends. I will be sorry to leave BRGS and I hope to visit regularly."

Lancashire Young Chef 2010

The aim of the Lancashire Young Chef Competition is to develop young people's understanding of food, nutrition and the hospitality industry. December saw the launch of the fiercely contested competition at BRGS with internal heats for Key Stage 4 (aged 14-16 years) students who had the brief to design and make a three course celebration meal for a chosen couple. The meal needed to have excellent sensory characteristics and be nutritionally balanced. The Key Stage 3 (aged 11 – 14 years) competition followed a similar theme but students need to prepare only two courses.



All students had to select ingredients from a list set by the Lancashire Education Business Partnership and points were deducted for any ingredient used that was unlisted. There was an emphasis on sustainability and sourcing local products as the students had to calculate the number of miles their food ingredients had travelled. Throughout the competition students are expected to demonstrate their creativity, practise their culinary skills and build relationships between their school, local colleges and industry partners.

Students had to work in pairs (designated Chef and Assistant Chef) and the winners at Key Stage 4 were:

Thomas Acton, Year 10 (Chef) and William Nowell, Year 10 (Assistant Chef). They made a meal for a hypothetical rugby player and his partner to celebrate rugby success in an international tournament. Their menu was: bell pepper cheese on toast, Moroccan fish stew and passion fruit yoghurt.

The winners at Key Stage 3 were:

Rachel Service, Year 9 (Chef) and Callie Hudson, Year 9 (Assistant Chef). They made a meal for a young couple celebrating their engagement on Bonfire Night. The menu was: chicken kebabs and savoury rice followed by a sparkling melt-in-the-middle chocolate pudding.

Both teams are now ready for the Area Heats to be held this month at Accrington and Rossendale College. If successful, they will go through to the Lancashire Young Chef Grand Final.



Winning Chefs

Obituaries

We were saddened to learn of the following:

Kay Shufflebottom née Burgin (1974 - 1979) sadly died in December aged 47. Kay was a secretary of Holcombe Hunt Pony Club and enjoyed her horses as well as spending time with family and friends. Kay had worked at various companies including Shuttleworths Vets and was an IT technician at BRGS for over 9 years.

Alan Foster (1933 – 1938) died in July 2009 aged 87 years old. Alan was a Chartered Civil Engineer who began a career working for the North West Water Board for almost 30 years, retiring in 1982, then aged 60. He was also

an active member of Probus and a Friend of Rossendale Museum. Alan enjoyed painting, motor sports, cricket and photography as well as holding slide shows at the Bacup Natural History Society. He leaves his wife, Freda, and two sons, Stephen and Graham (both former BRGS). His surviving brother, Rex, also former BRGS, lives in New Zealand.

Former student and former member of staff, **Pat Wilson** sadly died in January. Pat started teaching Home Economics at BRGS in 1965 and worked at the school for over 20 years. She gave significant support to musical activities within school over the years and she was an excellent contralto, performing with a choir based in Huddersfield.

Who? What? Where? When?

We were overwhelmed by the number of replies in response to the photograph of the girls on the back seat of a coach on a school trip. Our thanks go to Abdul Shahid, Luke Broadbent, Leanne Morton, Lorna Booth, Louise Cook, Peter Dickins, Fiona Colton née McGrogan, Sue Roberts (former BRGS Head of Music), Lorien Stanfield, Paul Hoskins, Kevin Grehan and Mark Wilbraham.

The consensus was that the students from left to right were: Claire Chapman, Elizabeth Halliwell, Claire Harris, Elizabeth Rhodes, Ruth Burthom and finally, Fiona McGrogan on the floor in the centre of the photo!

There was, however, confusion over the date of the trip. All of the students were at school from 1991-1996 and most of the girls went on to the sixth form. Some former students said that the photo was taken on a trip to France, some said a trip to Germany, another said a music trip to Wales, one person said it was a Duke of Edinburgh trip and a final suggestion was a trip to Missouri! We hope that as those featured in the photo reach their 30th birthdays that they enjoy looking back on their time at BRGS!

If anyone recognises the students on this edition's photo then please do get in touch.



Dates for your diary

6th - 7th May
Dance Show 2010

11th May
Year 10 Parents' Evening

13th May
Arts Alumni Reception

26th May
Music Concert
Year 13 Leavers' Day

31st May – 4th June
Half-term

23rd June
Music Concert

25th June
Year 13 Leavers' Ball

9th July
Year 11 Leavers' Ball

20th July
School closes at
12.30 p.m.

**21st July –
6th September**
Summer Holidays

3rd September
Years 7 and
Years 12 return

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Message Board

- A warm welcome goes to our new members of staff this term: Kate Byrne, Head of Biology, who joins us from Sale Grammar School; Steve Hyams begins work as our technology technician; Andy Cairns is our new Science laboratory assistant; and Sarah Smith joins us in the PE department to add to confusion as the Head of PE is also a Mrs. Smith! We welcome Lee Harrison and Nigel Barker as site assistants to our busy maintenance team and finally, we welcome back Sophie Fowler-Gibbs and Diane Bamford from maternity leave and we send our best wishes to Karin Kolbuck prior to the arrival of her baby.
- Congratulations to the BRGS Eco-Schools Group and to Helen Casey, both finalists in the Pride in Rossendale Awards in the category of Young Volunteer of the Year to honour dedication to communities in the Valley. Helen was nominated by her Guide company where she is a volunteer Young Leader. Keir Forth, Head Boy at Haslingden High School, won the title because of his regular volunteering work at Tor View School. Keir was described as a: "an active member of school life and a positive young person who is involved in many aspects of school including peer mentoring, the pastoral garden and the management steering group."
- Our congratulations go to Gemma Walmsley (1992-1999) who has gained her Diploma of the European College of Veterinary Neurology at the end of September 2009 and is continuing to work for the Royal Veterinary College Queen Mother Hospital whilst researching congenital muscle disease and studying for a PhD.
- Former students, Brett Aspden, Alastair Regan and Amber Watson have all graduated from Newcastle University in their respective subjects of sociology, accounting and finance, and marine biology. Alastair is currently on a gap year and is heading off to Australia and New Zealand before returning to take up a graduate trainee accountancy job at Jackson-Stephen LLP in September.
- Kirsty Knight (2000 – 2007) is currently studying abroad as part of a French degree at the University of Liverpool and she has just got engaged to Chris Priestley (1999 – 2006) who is about to graduate with a degree in Chemistry from the University of Liverpool later this year. We send them our best wishes.
- Lia-Jay Holmes (1997-2004) appeared on the television programme *Take Me Out*, presented by *Phoenix Nights* star Paddy McGuinness. Lia-Jay, a psychology graduate from the University of Manchester and care worker, won a date with a 64 year old former rock star drummer from the Scottish pop rock group *Marmalade*, who was 40 years her senior!
- Nick Daunt (2000-2007) has also been in the TV spotlight in his role on the *University Challenge* team representing the University of Manchester. Nick who is studying Mechanical Engineering has played an active part in the team and at the time of writing, they have reached the semi-finals. The Manchester team have high standards to live up to after last year's team won the series. Also on the team is Tom Whyman, captain Jakob Whitfield and Rachael Neiman who is blind and has become a role model through her involvement in the show.
- Our congratulations to Kevin (history teacher and Head of Year) and Gemma Grehan (history teacher and Assistant Head of Year) on the birth of their daughter Ava Rose Walker-Grehan.



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