



NCS NEWSLETTER

24th May 2024

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Headmaster's Message



Readers will recall how earlier in the year school was awarded the Association of Character Education's (ACE) Character Plus kitemark. We are very proud of this, and I am grateful to Mr Bell for leading school through it. School has been asked to speak at ACE's national conference to tell of its character education journey and specifically the link between Sport and Character. Mr Cliffe will be leading this. I'm not a huge follower of sport but I recognise the commitment and dedication required to become a better sportsman or woman. Even those with seemingly natural flair testify to the hours of practice and early

hours, keeping two jobs going etc in their dedication to their sport. And often they thank their support network – parents, coaches, schools, sponsors – in helping them achieve their goals. What the character education is about is recognising those traits and applying them across the challenges young people face. If they can get up early on a Saturday to play ice hockey, they can get to school on time. If they can work repeatedly on a tennis grip, even though it's boring, they can practise algebra/vocabulary/formulae until it's mastered. If they can come back from a 3-0 defeat and play the next game with positivity, they can adopt a growth mindset in all their subjects. We love to hear from pupils' achievements: on the school website, follow the links Home > Character > Character Development to see how you can share or indeed nominate a child's character successes. We feel it is important that children recognise the positive traits in themselves so they can develop holistically.



1 - Character Plus Plaque

Hamblin Education Trust

We work closely with our associate school AGSB at many levels. I was pleased therefore to be approached by an NCS pupil, Isaac A, to see how we can foster pupil links between the two schools. Headmaster of AGSB, Mr Wright, has supported this venture, and we shall create a joint forum for pupils. After half-term will be their inaugural meeting and I look forward to hearing of its developments.

Loreto Prep

There was a meeting last week at Trafford Council to hear a challenge to the designation of the former Loreto Prep site as an asset of community value. I am grateful to the parents who attended to defend and support robustly this designation. I feel confidence in the case made. The outcome will be notified at the end of this month.

There is also a parental petition asking parents to support this opportunity to have the adjacent land of Loreto Prep acquired to allow extra facilities for the pupils of North Cestrian School.

<https://chng.it/8dCMDKlrJf> There are currently 1791 signatories.

Advanced Notice

Mon 3/6	School resumes half-term (GOLD week)
Tue 11/6	Year 10 Parents Evening (On-line)
Sun 16/6-Thu 20/6	Barcelona Trip
Wed 19/6	INSET (School Closed to pupils) PTFA Meeting - 1900-2100 Head's Study
Fri 28/6	Summer Music Festival Vanstone Hall 7-8pm TBC
Mon 1/7-Fri 5/7	Year 10 Work Experience Week
Mon 1/7	New Year 6 Parents Evening
Thu 4/7	New Year 6 Induction Day

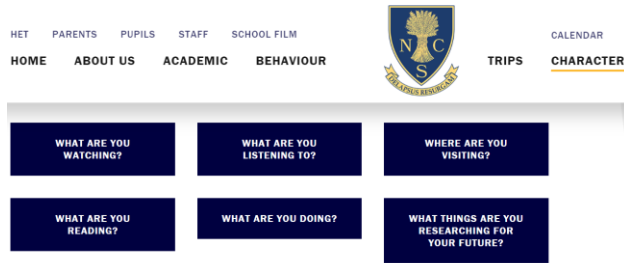
Deputy Reflections



Please take every opportunity to increase your experiences and cultural capital during the holiday. The cultural capital web link below allows you tell school (for your Arbor record) of the things you are listening to, watching, reading, doing, visiting, and researching for your future/careers. During a school holiday you can be the boss and design your own route to this rich and fulfilling life, but if you need so hints and a starting point then visit the character section on the website.

I hope you are keeping the fortnightly Arbor report safe with all the notes of your character development and cultural capital curiosity of evidence!

After briefings this week on character in physical education, pupils have been sent an Arbor assignment to complete their character benchmark certificate for sport. This also contains a list of all the sports clubs in Altrincham for pupils to join! This is on top of all the extra-curricular clubs available.



2 - You will find things here on the school website.

- See if you are on the [character news](#)
- Check out the latest [character development opportunities](#) or continue to build your [character bench mark certificate](#).
- [You can Nominate a Pupil for their Character Development here.](#)
- Pique your interest for the [cultural capital](#) and [send in your reflections](#)

Academic News

Learning = a change in long-term memory
 ‘if nothing has changed nothing has been learned’

Meaningful learning is about producing organised, coherent and integrated mental models that allow people to make inferences and apply their knowledge. (Karpicke, J. 2012)

THE BENEFITS:

- ① Retrieval practice aids later retention
 ‘every time you retrieve a memory it becomes deeper, stronger and easier to access in the future’
- ② Testing identifies gaps in knowledge
- ③ Testing causes students to learn more from the next learning episode
- ④ Testing produces better organisation of knowledge



⑤ Testing improves transfer of knowledge to new contexts



⑥ Facilitates retrieval of material that wasn't tested



⑦ Improves metacognition



⑧ Prevents interference from previous material when learning new content



⑨ Provides valuable feedback to teachers



⑩ Regular testing encourages students to study more



We have just purchased [Seneca Premium](#) for all our students. Teachers, parents and pupils can now track their engagement and learning via the online platform. Students will be invited to complete short assessments, exam questions etc, via links in Prep via Arbor. In addition, they can login using their school login details to access lots of courses beyond the curriculum too. These include summer learning for transition from Y7 to 8, Y9 to GCSE, Y10 to Y11, , GCSE to A level etc.

Your courses **Add courses**

Search for a course...

Filters Clear all (3)

Price >

Age Group

- GCSE (1119)
- A Level (253)
- KS3 (64)
- BTEC (2)
- IB Diploma (5)
- Primary (12)

GCSE X KS3 X

AET Summer Learning Programme:
Year 10 --> Year 11

AET Summer Learning Programme:
Year 8 --> Year 9

Applied Science: BTEC Level 3

3 - Seneca Premium

From September, we will be expecting all pupils to be set and to use Seneca as part of their Prep. Teachers will still set Prep knowledge to be learned and they will also set a Seneca quiz to pre-test that knowledge prior to the in-lesson prep test the following day. This provides **three key advantages**: greater accountability and tracking for teachers and parents (regular completion of homework has been shown to very effective in improving pupil outcomes, especially if parents are able to hold pupils accountable at home); teachers & pupils have greater knowledge of common errors which can inform lesson planning, targeted questioning and pupils giving more attention to the bits they didn't understand; spaced learning and pre-testing have been shown to improve long term retention and retrieval of information, learning is more effective.

Further information about Seneca can be found here:

[Parent FAQs](#) [Student FAQs](#)

Despite our move to an online platform to support testing and recall, it is very important that pupils **don't skip the learning phase**. They still need to study and memorise the knowledge. Seneca is just the tool we are using to test and reinforce the recall and transfer of that knowledge to long term memory. The Prep learning process can be found on page 20 of the Pupil Progress Tracker.

Retrieval Practice (the act of repeatedly recalling information from memory) is one of the cornerstones of the Cestrian Academic learning strategy. It is essential that pupils learn to remember, recall and apply knowledge. There is now a wealth of research evidence that suggests many benefits from it, which you can read more about [here](#).

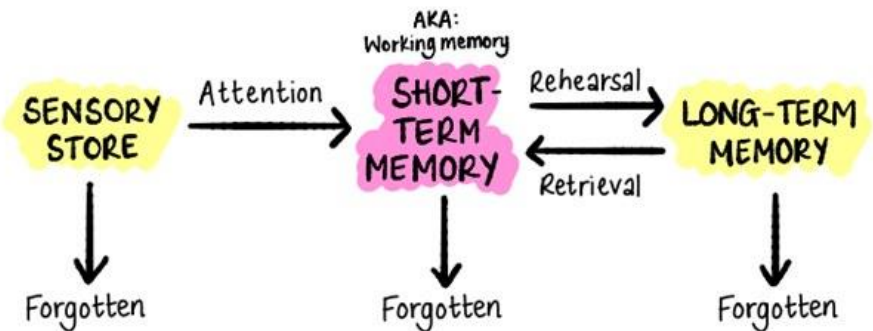
Retrieval

Grace Hudson
@MissH.biology

KATE
JONES

Practice

The act of recalling learned information from memory (with little or no support) and every time that information is retrieved, or an answer is generated, it changes the original memory to make it **STRONGER!**



THE MULTI-STORE MODEL OF MEMORY BY ATKINSON & SHIFFRIN (1968)

Peterson & Peterson (1959)

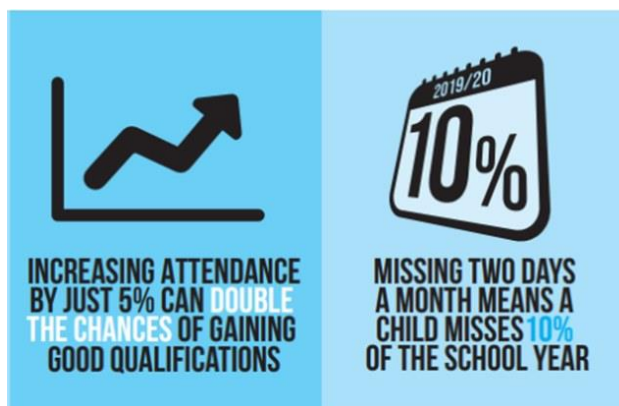
→ Almost all information stored in short-term memory that is not rehearsed is lost within 18 to 30 seconds!

Pastoral News

If in a school year, you are late every day by...	You would have lost approximately...	Or you would have missed approximately...
5 minutes	3.5 days from school	21 lessons
10 minutes	7 days from school	42 lessons
15 minutes	10 days from school	60 lessons
20 minutes	14.5 days from school	87 lessons
30 minutes	22 days from school	132 lessons

Punctuality

Did you know? Attending school and arriving on time have a direct impact on a student's education. When a student is late, not only is the student's teaching plan disrupted, but so is the teacher and the rest of the class. Regular attendance and punctuality is an employability and life skill. Our focus is on the holistic development of children and high standards so that every child can achieve their potential. Being on time maximizes learning success and prevents distractions throughout the class.



5 - Increasing Attendance

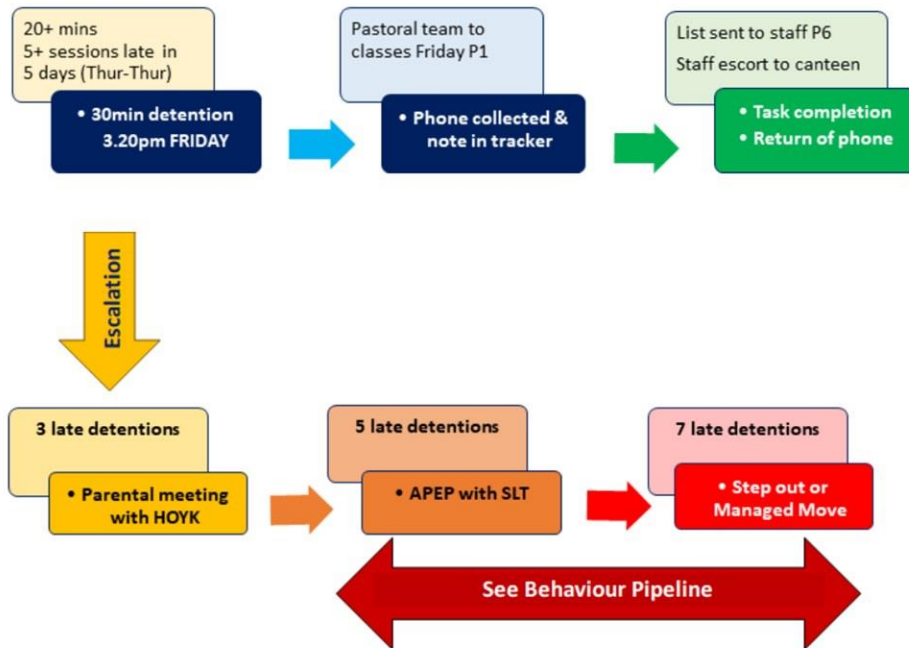
Punctuality to School

We have in place our late to school phone policy; if a child is late after 8:45am we look after their phones for the day, so they collect at the end and have a conversation regarding being late. Moving forward after half term this time will be set at 8:40am in hope that students are getting into school on time by the end of summer term, ready for a strong September start.

Punctuality to lessons

After half term, we aim to improve whole school punctuality to lessons by introducing a SLT punctuality intervention. This will take place on a Friday after school for at least 30 minutes. The expectation is that students are not late to lessons to maximise learning. Staff log poor punctuality by recording not only

that a student is late but by how many minutes they are late. Should a student be late 5 times or more OR miss over 20 minutes of learning in a week (from Friday to Thursday), students will be issued with a SLT punctuality intervention for a minimum of 30 minutes. During this intervention, students will be prompted to reflect on their punctuality, how to improve it and have the opportunity to catch up on missed work. We will invite parents in if a student had been issued the intervention 3 times to have an open forum with the aim to resolve poor punctuality.



6 - Punctuality to Lessons Consequences

When students have poor punctuality, there is a disruption and missed learning for everyone. It is rude, unfair and disrespectful to our whole school community. Despite this, we do recognise that sometimes there are genuine reasons for being late to lessons and these will be accounted for.

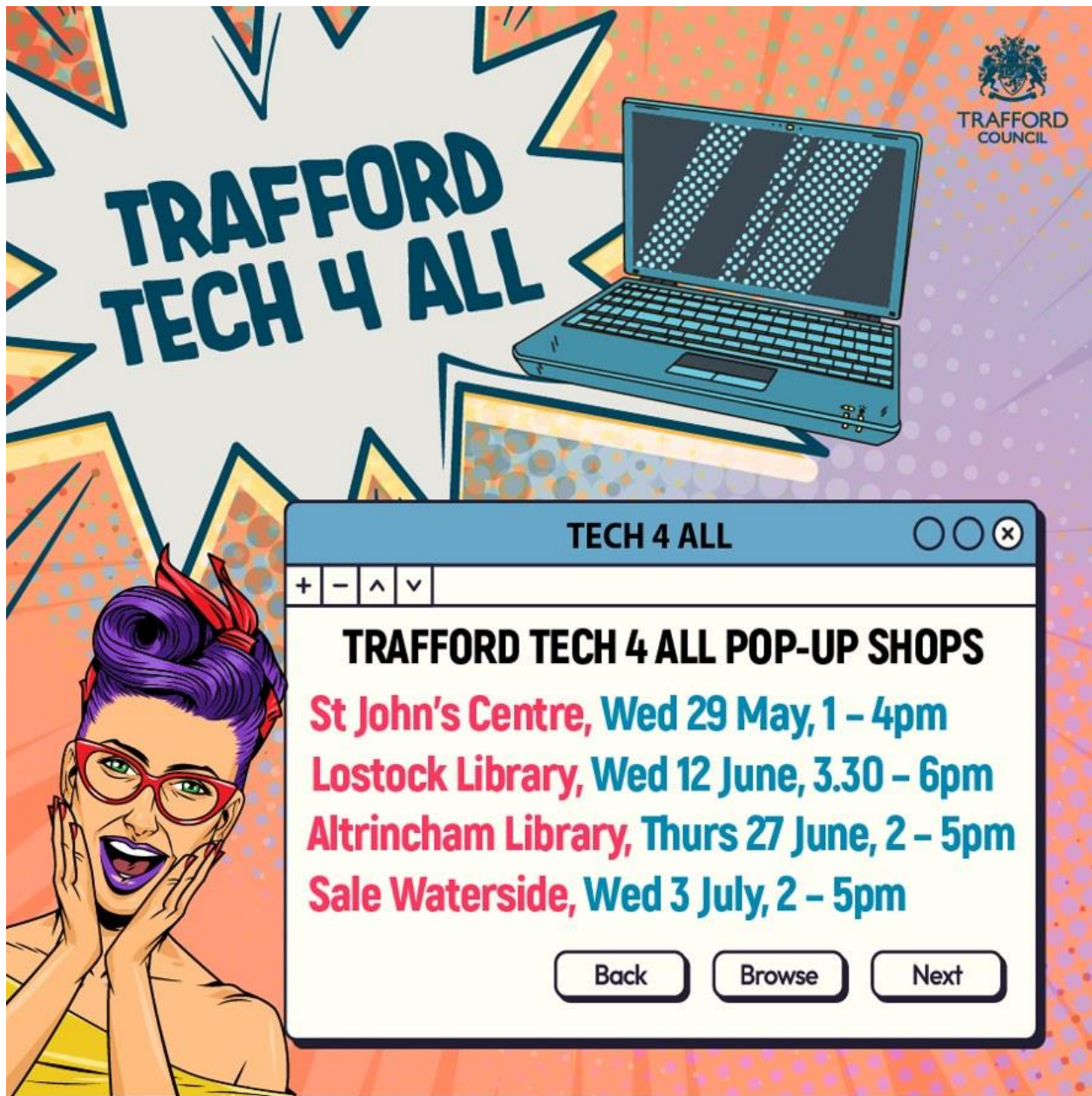
We do recognise students with 100% and punctuality with certificates and prize draws and it is important to note here that 97% of our students are already arriving to lesson on time!

Pastoral Director final message: HANDS OFF!

For the past half term, I have been informing all students that we are a 'Hands off School' meaning there is no reason students should be touching one another. This is because young people's fine and gross motor skills are still developing where what they think is a 'tap', is in fact a hit when interpreted by another. Some young people are naturally tactile but all too often touching others leads to

misunderstandings and can end in tears. Please support school by reminding your children that keeping hands off each other can and will avoid conflict.

Trafford Council and Community Computers



Trafford Council and Community Computers are opening a series of Trafford Tech4All pop-up shops providing:

- **Heavily discounted, high-spec laptops for £60 for low-income families receiving Universal Credit or other benefits**

- **Free 25GB data SIM cards, contract-free for 12 months** for *low-income families receiving Universal Credit or other benefits*
- **Low-cost broadband plans** for *families receiving Universal Credit or other benefits*
- **Online safety support from Greater Manchester Police**

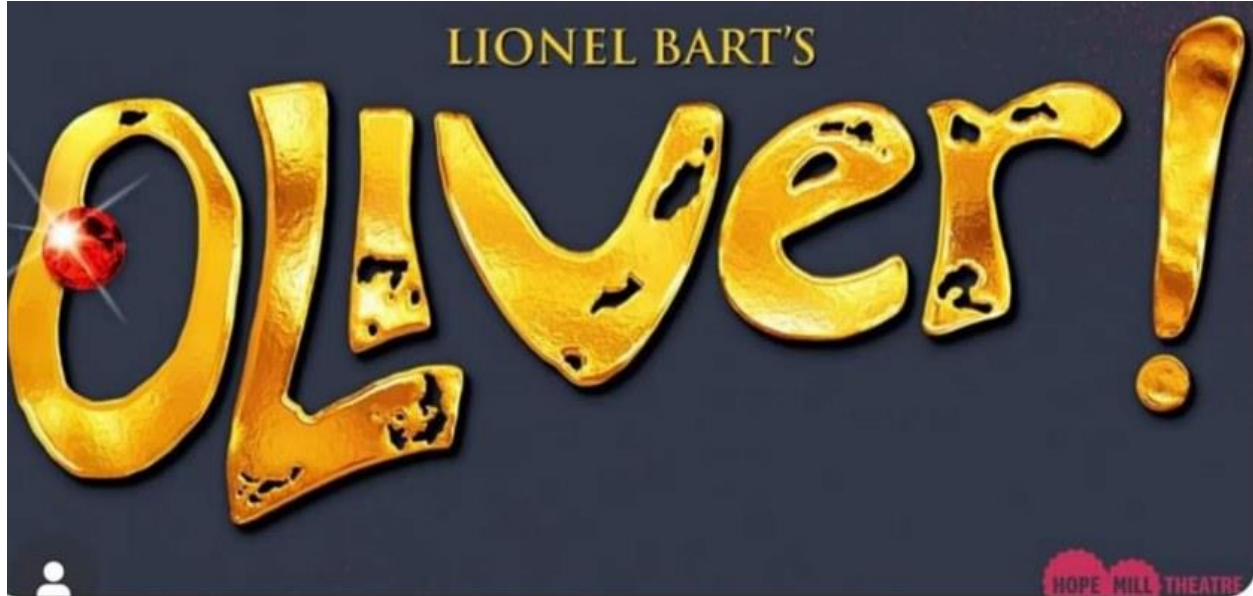
The pop-ups will have devices available for residents to purchase at the following locations:

- St John's Centre, Wednesday 29th May, 1 – 4pm
- Lostock Library, Wednesday 12th June, 3.30 – 6pm
- Altrincham Library, Thursday 27th June, 2 – 5pm
- Sale Waterside, Wednesday 3rd July, 2 – 5pm

People will be eligible to purchase an item from one of the pop-ups if they are in receipt of a form of financial support or are a low-income household. A full list of criteria is at: [Eligibility | Community Computers Shop](#). **Proof of eligibility and Trafford address is required to purchase.**

If you don't want to purchase a device, you can still come along to find out about digital skills training, how to keep your kids safe online and support with the costs of getting or staying connected at home.

Performing Arts



Diana in Year 7 recently performed in *Oliver!* at Hope Mill Theatre

Being involved in a show is a huge commitment and requires all the characteristics we value dearly at North Cestrian. After speaking to Diana, it's clear she's very **passionate** about Musical Theatre and any kind of Performance as she also dances.

Q: How long do you spend getting the show ready?

A: We started rehearsals around 6 months ahead of the show for a few hours every week. Coming closer to the opening night we had almost a week of daily practices with the whole cast to allow us to put everything together.

You can see Diana has to be incredibly **purposeful** about her rehearsals, making use of every minute to allow her to create an excellent show. Diana has to be **resourceful**, learning from others, asking for help when needed and being **responsible** by using her spare time, ensuring she knows her lines, choreography and songs.

Q: What happens on the day of the actual show?

A: Before the show starts, we normally arrive ahead of time and put on our costumes, do make up and have vocal warm-ups. After that, we have a run through the performance to see what may have gone wrong and look for director's feedback to improve.

Learning from mistakes is key in any show and helps improvements to happen. Being **resilient** to criticism is part of that learning experience and allows improvements to happen. The hours can be long, especially when you're at school during the day, resilience is incredibly important.

Q: What happens during the show?

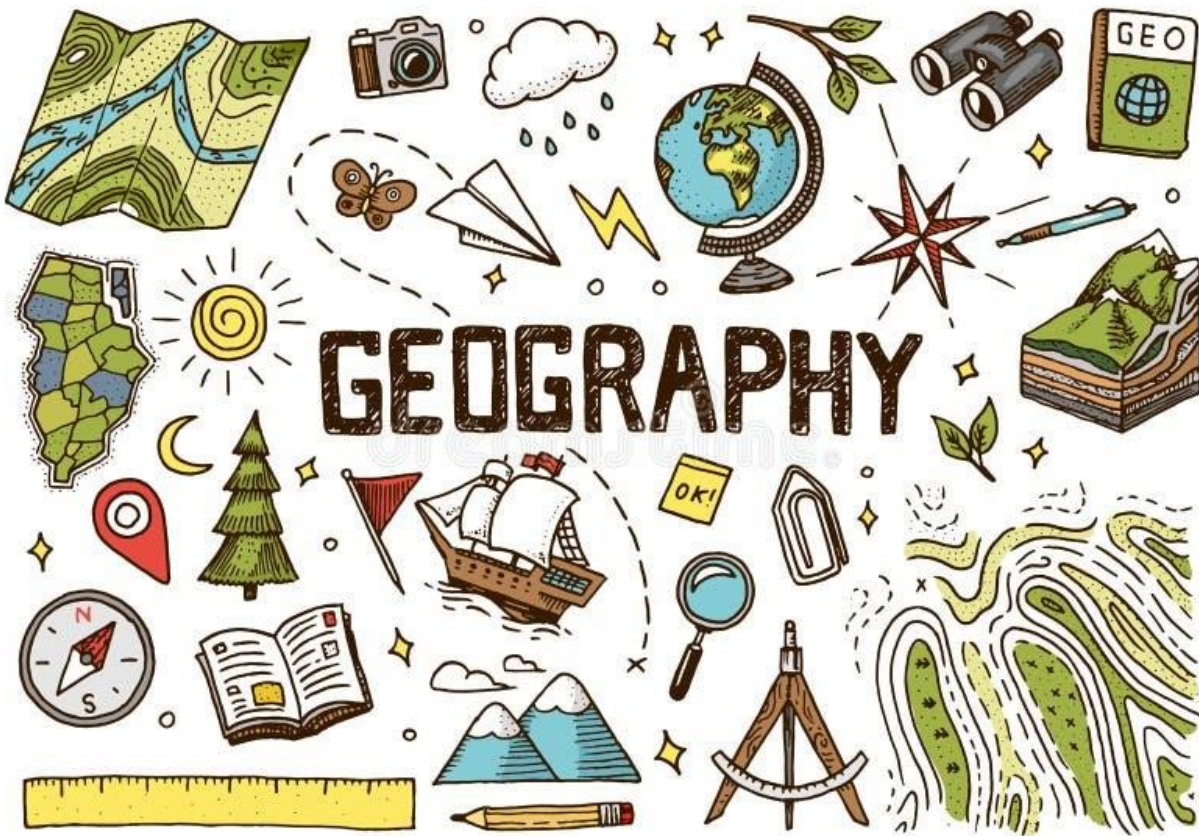
During the show it's quite a quick turnaround as we need to change costumes for next scene and be ready on time waiting in the wings. The best part was the final show when after the bow we received flowers and round of loud applause.

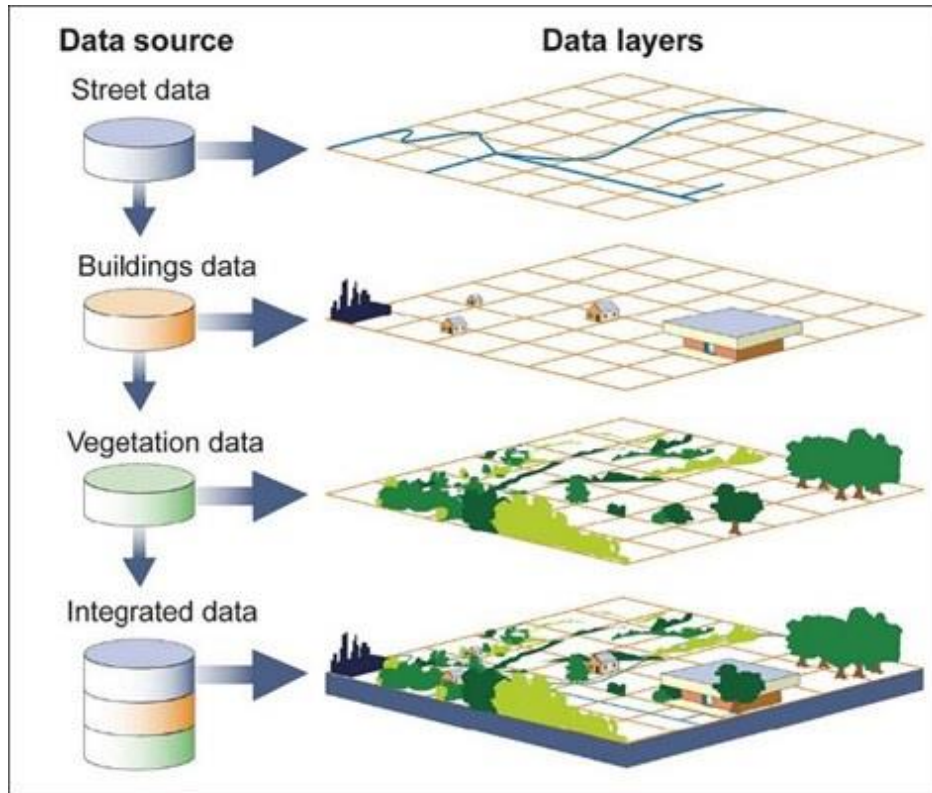
Supporting each performer on stage is a big part of building confidence and consistently demonstrating **generosity of spirit** in rehearsal and performance. The **sophistication** shown when performing is clear for anyone who has witnessed Diana's performance work – well done on a wonderful show and developing your character and performance skills.

I'd encourage everyone to get involved with their local theatre companies as well as school shows and take up the opportunities they offer.

Mr Bailey

Geography In The News...





Source: GAO.

GIS – when Geography meets technology!

A geographic information system consists of integrated computer hardware and software that store, manage, analyze, edit, output, and visualize geographic data. It's like a super-smart map that can do a lot more than just show you where things are. Here's a simple way to understand it:

Special Maps: Imagine you have a regular map that shows you streets, rivers, and mountains. A GIS map can show you all that and more, like where the schools are, where people live, where animals like to hang out, and even where it rains the most.

Layers: Think of a GIS map like a stack of clear plastic sheets. Each sheet has different information. One might show roads, another might show forests, and another might show where playgrounds are. You can look at one layer at a time or stack them to see how they all fit together.

Smart Map: GIS maps can answer questions. If you want to find the closest park to your house, a GIS can show you that. If you want to know which areas might get flooded if it rains a lot, a GIS can tell you that too.

Helping People: GIS is used by scientists, city planners, and even delivery drivers to help them make decisions. For example, it can help a city decide where to build a new school or help delivery drivers find the best route to take.

Ms Few and Mr Pullen attended the Esri conference in London this week where they saw a number of companies and organisations around the country using GIS in their businesses. You can find out more about the highlights from the Esri conference 2024 on Youtube.

If you would like to earn Cultural Capital points in Geography, then find out more about GIS and respond to either s.pullen@northcestrian.co.uk or s.few@northcestrian.co.uk

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1U1yOIVhnz8JvqDn74FN-BUtAsEUxJwJ>

Drop In Sessions:

THURSDAY ANY Week drop-in session 2:00-2:30 with SFe U12

THURSDAY Gold Week (Week 2) from 15:30 with LMc U10

**** Geography Star Pupils ****

These pupils have made an excellent effort in Geography at North Cestrian over the past term.

Year 7 - Harshi V

For excellent focus in lessons, sophisticated answers and Cultural Capital.

Year 8 - Carys P

For excellent engagement in lessons and answering questions.

Year 9 - Shu'ayb A

For excellent focus and answering questions in lessons.

Year 10 - Jacob W

For sophisticated answers in written work.

Year 11 - Mackenzie C

For pro-active revision, attendance at revision session and an excellent attitude throughout.

Contact Us:



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REPORT AN ABSENCE TO - absence@northcestrian.co.uk