



# NCS NEWSLETTER

- **Headmaster's Message**
- **Deputy Reflections**
- **Dates for your Diary**
- **RE News**
- **Science News**
- **Sports News**
- **Notices**

19 April 2024

*In This Issue...*





## Headmaster's Message



Every week, staff at North Cestrian nominate colleagues for GEM awards. GEM is 'going the extra mile'. One image might be of massive tasks being undertaken, but it's about acts of kindness shown. There's no stratagem: staff do these things simply to support each other. At the end of the term, we have a flurry of chocolate prizes and it's like the dodgems as staff run to receive their awards. Approximately 100 nominations are given each week. The arrangement is simple: we anonymously nominate a colleague and on Fridays a random number generator picks a winner: so it might be in your

stars – Capricorn, Gemini or whatever. Staff need little encouragement. In fact, the nominator feels as good as the nominated. There's no judgement about who gets the most nominations and it's certainly not always management! So, I would like to acknowledge my thanks to all who take part, to Mr Bailey for organising it and the wonderful, well-deserving staff for all their GEMS.

By the way, there are 12 GEMs hidden in the above paragraph. Can you find them? Answers further in the newsletter

The school, in fact, is blessed with many staff who do things unnoticed. Over the Easter holidays many support staff remained in school ensuring things kept functioning. One big undertaking was repair and clean to the Science Building Facade. The water ingress has been solved and the unsightly markings have been removed. It will have a fresh coat of paint in the summer half term break. Likewise, the ground-staff have worked tirelessly to ensure the pitches are ready for the summer season despite the unprecedented amount of rain.

### **Year 10 & Year 11 Exams**

Year 10 are currently taking their subject examinations. We try to emulate exam conditions to prime the students for their GCSEs in just over 12 months' time. For Year 11, their exams are now just a few weeks away. They have received back their mock examinations and it's now all about ensuring they know what to do gain those extra few marks. They have been trained in effective learning. The responsibility is theirs to put that into practice.

## **Advanced Notice**

Tue 23/4	Y7 Parents Evening 4-7pm online via School Cloud
Wed 24/4	PTFA 7-9pm in school – Head's study
Fri 26/4	Silver DofE
Fri 3/5	Silver DofE
Mon 6/5	School Closed – Bank Holiday

## Deputy Reflections



The Summer term sees our extensive review of the opinions of everybody in our community. This stakeholder voice - Parents, Pupils, and Staff - is something we take very seriously and we believe is one of the key reasons that we are most successful, together. We seek opinions on the Cestrian Way: the academic, the behaviour, and the character. There are questions relating to each subject, safety and safeguarding, even the quality of our communications, website and newsletter! Indeed, several of the questions are just what Ofsted would ask of stakeholders. Over the past 5 years the approval rating has often increased and has certainly enabled the school further develop as presented in the "You Said, We Did" feedback after the Voice questionnaires.

The process is extensive and will take a while. Therefore, I will make things as clear and easy as possible and give plenty of support. Your honest reflection and genuine feedback is greatly appreciated. We look to go beyond these results from the Summer Term 2023.

Pupil said:

Teachers help me do my best - Every lesson / most lessons - 93%

There is an adult I can talk to if I am worried - Strongly Agree / Agree - 85%

I am encouraged to be independent and take on responsibility - Strongly Agree / Agree - 96%

**Parents said:**

- 92% of parents say their child is happy at North Cestrian.
- 93% of parents would recommend North Cestrian to another parent.
- 90% say that North Cestrian gives their child the support they need to succeed.
- 86% know that North Cestrian has high expectations for their child

- 90% say that their child does well at North Cestrian
- My child feels safe at school - Strongly Agree / Agree 97%
- My child can take part in clubs and activities at this school - Strongly Agree / Agree 93%

**Staff said:**

- Behaviour is at least Good at NCS - Strongly Agree / Agree - 99%
- 95% of staff strongly agree / agree NCS has calm and orderly conduct

Final reminder to complete the parent voice: which clubs / societies / groups your child is part of beyond their school life. We could support their development by bringing those skills to the fore in school, by providing space to lead, and of course highlight the many and varied rich and fulfilling lives that might motivate others to follow you!. Please complete this Form Questionnaire with some details.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=BMpVtRm7BkGSpgMFydIHTQXATWouq4hJi0G5-4C8dedUNEo5RFpQSk1RMEtHM0dTQ09JODI4SkpMUC4u>

**MR CLIFFE ALREADY COLLECTS YOUR SPORTS CLUBS INFORMATION SO THINK BEYOND SPORT CLUBS IN THIS FORM QUESTIONNAIRE.**



*1 - QR CODE LINK TO THE questionnaire FOR EVERYONE!*

- 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](#)

### Dates for your diary:

- **Year 7 Parent consultation Evening 23rd April** – online via School Cloud. Further information will follow shortly about appointment bookings.
- **Year 10 Mock Examinations – 16th – 25th April** Parental permission forms for study leave will be sent to parents next week.
- **Year 11 Examination Preparation week** – 7th-10th May\* see below.
- **Year 11 Study Leave** starts on Monday 13th May Parental permission forms for study leave will be sent to parents next week.

### Revision Support

- Check your Tracker – NCS Revision Strategy pages 22-23; Tips and ideas pages 30-33.
- Make a plan you can stick to - <https://getrevising.co.uk/planner>
- Use revision time wisely. Every hour should have 4 parts: Learn it - Test it - Review it – Plan to fix it!
- [Distractors](#) – put mobile phones, music and devices away.
- Look after your brain! - Get 8 hours sleep, keep hydrated, don't overdo the snacks and never skip meals.
- Use the feedback from your teachers – What are you good at? (revise less), What needs to be improved? (revise more), What do you really struggle with (get help before your revise!).
- [Find strategies that work for you](#) – combinations of activities work best e.g. Flashcards, online quizzes, past paper questions, brain dump/mind maps, video-notes-questions-corrections – video again – retest. Teach it to someone else – working in pairs for quizzing and peer teaching works if you stay on task!
- NEVER – just reading and highlighting, NEVER learning mark schemes!
- How can parents help? [Read more here](#)

# 7 Ways That Parents Can HELP

A Parent's Survival Guide to Revision  
by @inner\_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk



- 1 Have high expectations and provide plenty of support**  
Both are needed to help your child improve, perform and develop resilience
- 2 Help them work smarter**  
Not all revision techniques are equal. Spacing out their revision and quizzes are better than cramming and highlighters
- 3 Cope well with their setbacks**  
There will be highs and lows. How you react to their lows will impact how many highs they have
- 4 Minimise distractions**  
Provide a revision area with minimum distractions (this include mobile phones!)
- 5 Rise and dine**  
Make sure they eat breakfast. It plays a big role in concentration and memory
- 6 Regular bedtimes and lots of sleep**  
If they sleep right, they will think right the next day
- 7 Avoid cabin fever**  
Encourage them to get fresh air each and every day



Pastoral News

## A Parent's Guide to Cyberbullying



**Many young people who are victims of cyberbullying suffer in silence.**

They feel they can't turn to parents or a trusted adult for support as they fear they may get in trouble or have their devices taken away from them. It can carry on all day, all evening and all weekend for the world to see, causing a lot of emotional stress to the victim and their family.



scan the QR code with your phone's camera for Parent Guides on how to help keep your children safe online



**It can very quickly lead to the victim feeling trapped, scared and vulnerable to grooming and blackmail.**



**Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.**

**Parents** please contact your school to enquire attending their next e-safety workshop or have any concerns.

Working with Home Office 'PREVENT', The Police and Crime Commissioner and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships to help keep children safe online.

**Skips Educational** Email: [info@skipssed.com](mailto:info@skipssed.com) Tel: +44 121 227 1941

Developed in partnership with



## Religious Education



We are delighted to be able to share the learning journey and successes of our pupils exploring the big questions of theology, philosophy and what it means to be a citizen in Britain today.

Welcome back after the Easter holidays, did you celebrate any religious festivals while school was closed for Easter? Have you seen our RE cultural capital opportunity which is inviting you to share that with your teacher or class?

<https://www.northcestrian.co.uk/page/?title=Religion&pid=150>

As RE teachers we love hearing about the different faiths and celebrations our pupils enjoy at home and welcome anyone sharing this with us.

Don't forget - Kindness Club is run by RE staff. We meet on Gold Week Thursday in U8 at KS3 Lunch. Attendance is regularly standing at 25 keen pupils and we welcome more from Year 7 and 8.

### Religious Education at Key Stage 3

**Year 7** are studying Buddhism and the life of the Buddha. We are looking at how do Buddhists live their lives and what influences do they have on their worldviews?

**Year 8** are looking at Pilgrimage across the world – we will be exploring Rome, Lourdes, Mecca, the River Ganges, Amritsar and thinking about the question – Can a journey be a pilgrimage even if it is not

religious? Thanks to all the pupils sharing their personal experiences and travels. This week we have seen water from the ZamZam well brought in by Shumaila and heard about

**Year 9** have just completed the first unit of their GCSE journey which was Christian Beliefs. Well done for all the revision and hard work you have put in so far.



*3 - Y7 - Buddhism*

## Key Stage 4

### **Key Stage 4 - Religious Studies**

Year 10 have completed their mock exam and are half way through their course. We look forward to continuing their next topic of Christian Practices with them after exams.



Year 11 Exams are just around the corner. RE is always the first whole school exam in the country and this year Paper 1 is on May 9th and Paper 2 on May 16th. There is still time to improve your grade from the mock.

**There are three separate revision sessions provided each week:**

**Tuesday 8am - 8:30 with Mr Dennison in L4**

**Wednesday Period 7 - 3:2—4pm with Mrs Isherwood-Cann in U8.**

**Thursday drop-in lunch sessions with Mrs Isherwood-Cann in U8.**

All pupils have been provided with a set of revision cards that summarise the entire curriculum and all teachers are on hand to help out anyone interested in improving their grades.



*4 - KS4 Revision*

## NCS Iftar 2024!

As a school community we couldn't have been more excited about the opportunity to invite all our amazing students to break their fasts together surrounded by their friends and teachers in school. We did not anticipate the generosity and hard work that our students showed in helping make the evening run without a hitch and ensuring everyone had the best time.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Dr Munir Ahmed from Altrincham Mosque Association who is a regular visitor to our Friday Khutbah's, who came to lead prayer and join our fabulous feast.

Finally, I would like to thank the parents of our students, who's time and generosity knew no limit with the meals and treats provided. It truly was a fantastic evening, and we look forward to many more celebrations in the future!

Mr Dennison



*5 - Iftar 2024*

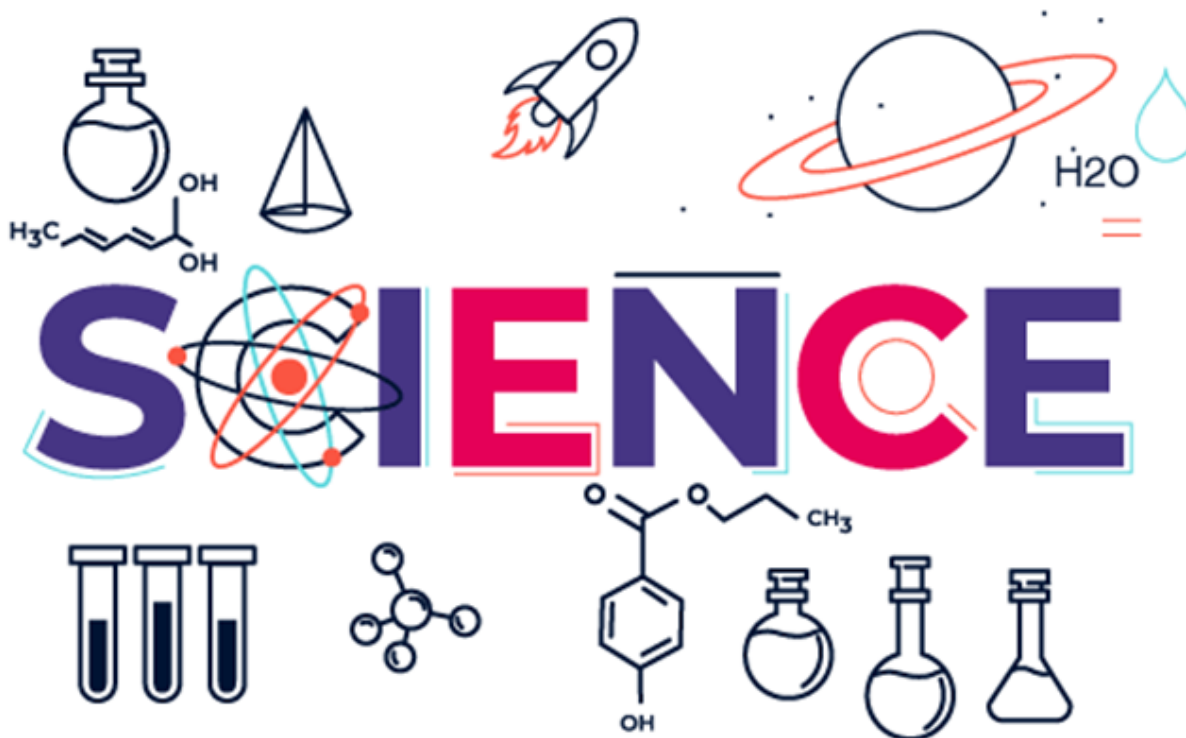


*6 - Iftar 2024*



7 - Iftar 2024

## Science



### *What are pupil's learning in Science this term?*

**Year 7** pupils continue with topics in Forces, Chemical Reactions and Plants. These topics will be followed by the third and final written test of the year. All classes will then complete the final topic of Space at the end of the summer term.

**Year 8** pupils have their third written assessment approaching before the half term holiday. Classes then complete topics in Ecology and Electrical circuits and fourth written assessment.

**Year 9** pupils have started the final 3 topics for the year. These topics act as a transition to GCSE courses. Pupils study topics already encountered in their KS3 curriculum but at a greater depth and breadth which is more relevant to GCSE syllabus. In biology pupils are studying Cells and Cellular Transport. The chemistry topic is Crude Oil and Organic Chemistry, and the final year 9 physics topic is Particles and Matter.

**Please note that there are no “End of Year Exams” for Y7-9 in Science.**

**Year 10** exams are currently ongoing. Pupils will then receive feedback and intervention following the marking of these exams before completing the planned units for this year.



**Year 11** classes are in the final stages of exam preparation, and we remind all pupils that teachers are happy to provide additional support at this important time. Please see your science teacher if you need any help/advice with revision.

## Extra-Curricular activities:

**Yashvi M.** has written this article to enter the **Young Science Writer of the Year award**:

### **The Human Factor**

*Information and references are from the Netflix documentary "Coded Bias" and article ITN Businesses.*

Imagine this, two parallel timelines in which AI is born. The year is 1956. In the first timeline AI grows, develops and thrives among humans and in the other it is subjected to hate, abuse, exploitation and an overall negative environment. Gradually, AI in the first timeline becomes a valuable member of society whereas AI in the other lifetime becomes a grave threat to society. And what's the one thing that stayed constant in both timelines? Human exposure. Dear reader, I introduce to you: The Human Factor.

Humans are clever, we invented the internet, electricity, wheels, AI and technology but more importantly we invented chocolate. We use these every day and they make up a large part of our lives now. We humans love an easy life and AI and technology facilitate this. Most big companies use it to carry out tasks, manage different parts within the company and some even use AI to analyse CVs for job applications.

Humans can positively impact AI for the good. The not for profit organisation Kickstart AI, set out to fix the growing complication of food poverty in the Netherlands using the help of AI and technology. Four of the biggest Dutch companies came together to solve this issue. "A million people are living in poverty," says Letty Broere, a Board Member for the charity Dutch Food Bank. "There are 400,000 people who need food help, and a third of them are children under the age of 12." By partnering up with one of the largest supermarkets in the Netherlands, they have used their technology to decrease food waste and anticipate areas where there are, or may be, areas needing food support. Additionally, with the help of a website chat bot they have also been able to tackle the issue of language barriers and it is able to answer questions and concerns in a range of languages.

Now do not let the "artificial" in "artificial intelligence" fool you because its intelligence is very much real and used in day to day life, sometimes without you even knowing. One-time, AI was used in the form of a chatbot back in 2016 when Microsoft released the chatbot Tay.ai on Twitter. Vulnerabilities and holes in Tay's code enabled Tay to quickly spin out of control. Luckily, Microsoft shut Tay down just 16 hours after its release but in the span of 16 hours, Tay had been transformed into a racist, misogynistic monster. I suppose it should not really be a surprise considering Tay was exposed to such a vast amount of information and data from tweets from various internet trolls, it was inevitable for Tay to become so corrupted.

I think I would not be totally incorrect in saying that Microsoft underestimated Tay and its abilities; it just goes to show how powerful AI can be and as a conclusion we learnt that AI learns from humans constantly feeding it information (regardless of whether that information is good or bad), secondly, AI

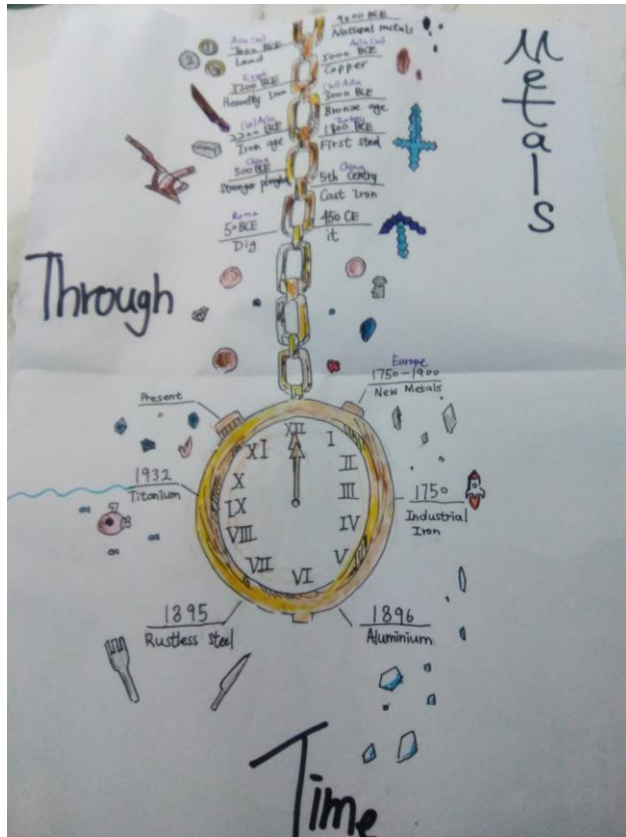
learns extremely fast and last but not least, AI will replicate and behave in a way that is similar to the environment it exists in and this is the “normal” that it learns to become familiar with.

Newton is famous for a lot of things, for example his third law of motion, which states: “When two forces interact, they exert equal and opposite forces”. Even though this is in relation to forces, AI and humans interacting exert an opposite force (both being good and bad) however the consequences are not equal. AI has huge potential but also dangerous consequences. Everything has winners and losers – there will always be the one group with the upper hand. AI has started to take over many jobs and, in the future, it will continue to do so leaving the workers previously doing these jobs vulnerable. Businesses mainly will benefit from AI and many have invested lots into implementing it into their operations – they don’t need holidays or get sick and will do exactly as they are programmed to. This may leave currently secure people at risk and while businesses grow and succeed, will it mean that these unemployed people will fall behind?

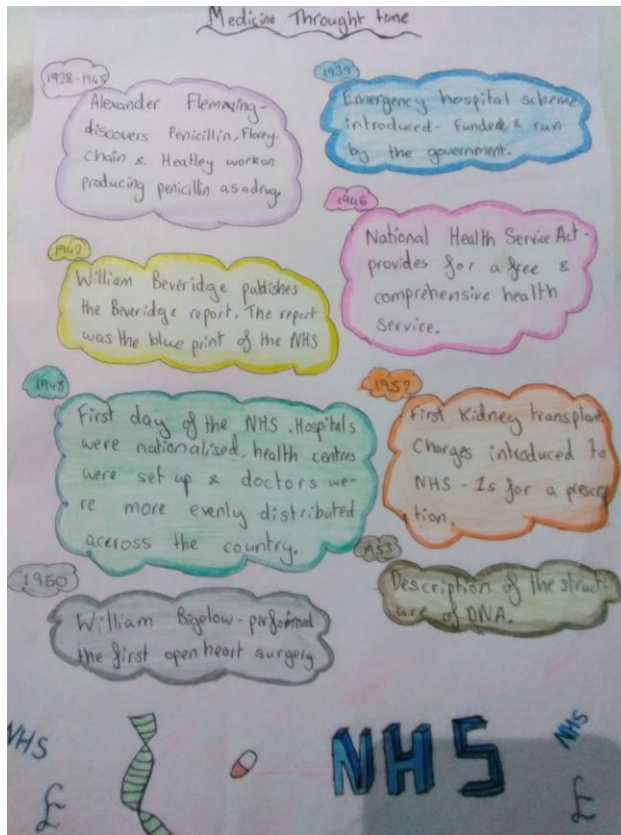
If we as humans can govern AI so that it is controlled in a way which allows it to be used ethically and also make sure it complements the good part of human nature, we can see that there is a potential for it to enhance the lives of everyone for the better. Because humans can adapt to different situations, in my opinion, I would like to think that as AI takes over, a new set of requirements will present themselves where AI and humanity can co-exist and we reach an equilibrium.

### **British Science Week**

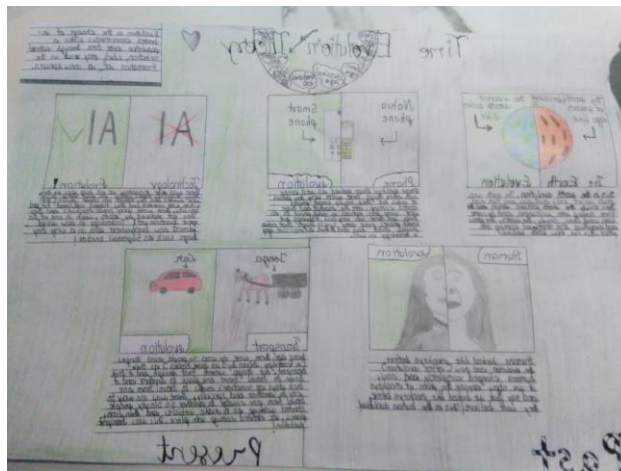
We received many fantastic entries for the **British Science Week Poster competition** on the theme of Time. Posters by Kaiden F. Ella K. Stefanie R. Anjali J. and Harshi V. have been selected as our school prize winners and have been entered into the national competition. The posters from Kaden F, Harshi V and Anjali J. are shown here. Can these 5 pupils see Dr Rodger on Monday to collect a prize.



8 - Kaiden F.



9 - Harshi V.



10 - Anjali J.

**Earth Sciences Club**

This term the Earth Sciences Club have been exploring their new resources courtesy of Professor Coe at the Open University (pictured).



We have studied rock samples using petrographic microscopes and hand specimens and discussed rock formation and how this links to modern geological processes. Pupils demonstrated their passion for the environment through our discussions of climate change and pollution.

Pupils have been developing sophisticated scientific knowledge and enjoyed presenting this through producing posters for the Royal Society poster competition.



11 - Rock samples

Interested in Science? Want to apply and build your Science skills in ways beyond your science lessons? Want to learn more about the Earth and life on it?

**Come and join us in T2 at 15:30 every Thursday!**

## Gem Answers



Every week, staff at North Cestrian nominate colleagues for **GEM** awards. **GEM** is 'going the extra mile'. One image might be of massive tasks being undertaken, but it's about acts of kindness shown. There's no stratagem: staff do these things simply to support each other. At the end of the term, we have a flurry of chocolate prizes and it's like the dodgems as staff run to receive their awards. Approximately 100 nominations are given each week. The arrangement is simple: we anonymously nominate a colleague and on Fridays a random number generator picks a winner: so it might be in your stars – Capricorn, **Gemini** or whatever. Staff need little encouragement. In fact, the nominator feels as good as the nominated. There's no judgement about who gets the most nominations and it's certainly not always management! So, I would like to acknowledge my thanks to all who take part, to Mr Bailey for organising it and the wonderful, well-deserving staff for all their **GEMS**.

## Sports News



### **Trafford Netball**

#### **Year 7A Netball Tournament - Thursday 14th March**

The tournament was held at Altrincham Grammar. The games were of a high standard, played against: Wellington, Loreto, Urmston and Altrincham.

MVP award. **Jess T** for outstanding team all-round play, in attack and defence.

#### **Year 7B Netball Tournament - Tuesday 19th March**

The tournament was held at Altrincham Grammar. Games were played against: Loreto, Sale Grammar, Sale High, BTH, Altrincham Grammar and Stretford Grammar.

MVP award. **Jessica O** for her captaincy, support for the team and good all-round netball skills.

A special mention to two sports leaders, **Mae G** and **Tuela N**, for their invaluable support in helping to organise the teams, both before and during the competition.

Great credit to all the girls in the squad for the determination and character they displayed.

Mrs Lawson



12 - Team 7A





13 - Team 7B

## Trafford Basketball

### U16 Basketball Tournament - Wednesday 13th March

The tournament was held at Blessed Thomas Holford. The students played matches against Wellington, BTH and Sale Grammar.

Students played with pride and passion representing North Cestrian.

MVP Award **Lyin F** for great attacking skills dribbling and shooti

Mrs Lawson





## Contact Us:



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**REPORT AN ABSENCE TO - [absence@northcestrian.co.uk](mailto:absence@northcestrian.co.uk)**