



Derek Paravicini Concert

We were honoured at the end of the term to have a visit from musical Savant Derek Paravicini.

Derek is the most incredible musician; he has absolute pitch and can play a piece of music having only heard it once. He came along with his official biographer, Adam Ockelford, who wrote “In the Key of Genius: The Extraordinary Life of Derek Paravicini”. Adam is Professor of Music and Director of the Applied Music Research Centre at the University of Roehampton and is also the Founder and Trustee of The Amber Trust, a UK-wide charity that supports blind and partially sighted children and young people in their pursuit of music.

Many, many NCW students have benefited from the generosity of The Amber Trust over the years, receiving funding for instruments and instrumental lessons. Before the concert Derek and Adam were able to meet some current NCW students who are benefiting from the Trust.

The chapel was packed with students and staff enjoying the concert, marvelling at

Derek’s breath-taking talent and the speed and accuracy of his playing. Some of the students were also able to get involved, perform for Derek and play alongside.

It was a magical morning, thank you so much to Derek and Adam for coming along and for the continued support for students from The Amber Trust.



Ready, Steady, Ski!



In February Half Term, ten students from NCW had a trip of a lifetime learning to ski in the glorious Italian Alps.

Setting off from NCW by minibus, spirits were sky high on the short drive to Birmingham airport. This was followed by a smooth two hour flight to Turin and a quick bus transfer to Sauze d'Oulx and the group had reached their resort where they would then have a full four days of skiing on the slopes.

The trip was arranged by our travel partners, Seable, who provide accessible tailored holidays to the vision-impaired community.

The students had five hours of ski lessons each day from Sciabile, an established organisation which enables people with various types of disabilities to participate in skiing and snowboarding in Sauze d'Oulx. Students and staff enjoyed breakfast and evening meals at the hotel and then had lunch at restaurants on the mountains.

Activities Coordinator Phil Bresnan says, "My favourite part was watching each student graduate from the nursery slope and head on to the mountain. It was amazing! All the students were exhausted at the end – what a great six days!"

Head student Amy said, "The ski trip was a great opportunity for me to learn a new skill with a qualified instructor. We are all extremely grateful for having the opportunity to attend. It is extremely hard for me to pick a highlight. The three words I thought of to describe the experience were "unforgettable, life-changing and magical". This has been an experience that I will never forget and I hope to go skiing again soon. I would also like to take the opportunity here to thank the staff who came with us, we would not have been able to do this trip without them."

Judo success for Rico...again!

Sixth Form student Rico is a champion judoka and has come back from the British School Judo Championships with a medal in his hand!

We caught up with Rico to find out about the competition, "I fought in the British Schools Judo Championships on 10th March. The competition comprised of a VI section and a section with people with additional needs. I fought the VI section. Although I won the gold medal, the people who I fought against were members of my Paralympic potential squad, so that was quite hard as we train together and know each other very well! I would like to say well done to them for their efforts. One of my highlights was beating someone who I had previously lost to. This was made even better because he is a left-hander which is an issue for a right-hander in judo. The training also went well for the competition in regard to fitness work. I also managed to use one of my best techniques. I would like to thank my coaches for getting me through the training sessions, coaching me on competition day and helping me to win the medal. I would also like to thank my family and supporters as well."

Well done Rico - the sky is your limit!



VIEW Conference

The nationwide annual VIEW conference occurs every year and staff at NCW are very lucky that it is held in the Midlands area.

This year staff members Will Stark (Strategic Lead for Student Progress), Victoria Ward (Strategic Lead for VI Education), Craig Swainland (Teacher of IT) and Louise Rosoman (Teacher of Economics) were able to go along and benefit from the information sharing, talks and workshops on offer. NCW were also able to take a table in the exhibition hall, which was a great opportunity to showcase NCW and share our offer with other professionals working in the field of education for those with a vision impairment.

VIEW is a professional membership organisation for QTVIs (Qualified Teachers for the Vision Impaired) or those in training to become QTVIs, teaching assistants, Habilitation specialists, or others working in a role supporting children and young people with vision impairment. VIEW is

a leading voice representing the interests of children and young people with VI, championing best practice and promoting the specialist VI education sector – helping its members support the education, development and opportunities of children with vision impairment.

It was an invaluable couple of days, thank you to VIEW for hosting.





Rugby Six Nations trip to Twickenham

The NCW Activities Team took a group of students to see the England v Ireland Six Nations match this March. Not only were they lucky enough to get tickets but thanks to the RFU they were also pitchside and for England supporters it just happened to be the most dramatic and exciting match of the Six Nations so far!

With Ireland undefeated, it seemed unlikely that the England team would be able to bring a halt to Ireland's bid for a grand slam.

England made a confident start with Ollie Lawrence (ex-Worcester Warriors player!) scoring a try in the fourth minute but Ireland were leading 12-8 at half-time thanks to four penalty kicks. After the break, Ireland scored a try, then two more for England. But Ireland got a second try in the 73rd minute to swing the contest back in favour of the visitors. It seemed like Ireland were going to do it but in the most dramatic climax, England kicked a last-gasp drop-goal to win the match for England! Final score 23-22 to England.

Carys said, "I really enjoyed the trip to the rugby on Saturday. I loved going to a stadium that I had never been to before and seeing such a great match! The atmosphere was brilliant as you had all of the fans cheering the teams on and celebrating when they scored."

Lawson said, "It was very good and fun and I enjoyed it! I loved spending time with Jamie."

Braille Art Competition

We are delighted to announce that NCW came a runner up in the Schools category of this year's Braille Art Competition!

Each year our charity partners **VICTA** run a Braille Art Competition which is open to all young people with a vision impairment aged 0 to 29 years. The challenge this year was to create a piece of Braille art with the theme of 'time'. Time is the 2024 theme for British Science Week and entrants were tasked with being as imaginative as possible.

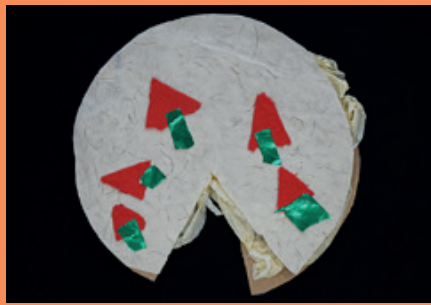
As always, NCW students were keen to enter and took to the drawing board to plan their ideas. Inspiration and creativity levels were sky high and after many hours of work, 12 pieces were submitted.

Congratulations to all the winners! Here are a few of the submissions from NCW students.



Aliyah, age 12 – 'Seasons'

Aliyah has created four tactile images from air drying clay to represent each of the seasons and positioned them next to the name of the season in braille. Autumn is a brown leaf, winter is a white snowflake, spring is a yellow flower and summer is a chocolate ice cream in an orange waffle cone.



Darcy, age 11- 'Tea Time'

Darcy has created what looks like a pizza with a slice taken from it. Cream tissue paper is sandwiched between two card shapes. They have decorated it with tomato shapes made from textured red paper and shiny green foil paper.



Finn, age 12 – 'Clock'

Finn has made a 3D clock from card with a white paper face. The numbers are set in braille using different coloured pompoms. He has made arrow-shapes clock hands and coloured them in black – they are attached using a split pin so that you can turn them.



Ellie, age 13 – 'Fossil Fish'

Ellie has used a branch with lots of smaller branches shooting off

the sides to represent the shape of a fish fossil. She has glued white paper over the top to form a tactile image.



Rory, age 11 – 'My Favourite Time of the Day, Breakfast with Toast and Jam'

Rory has created an image of a clock – he has stuck down yellow tissue paper and then a rectangle of foil for the screen. The time stuck on top is 8:15. There are three pom poms at the top and a wiggly yellow pipe cleaner for the wire. In the bottom left is a paper plate with corrugated card for the toast and ripped, textured, red card for the jam.



Maxwell, age 14 – 'My Favourite Time on a Train'

Maxwell has printed an image of a modern train and painted it. He has stuck Wikki Stix around the edges to make the shape of the train tactile.





Lionel Bart's **Oliver!**

The Musical Theatre Group put on an outstanding production of "Oliver!", based on the 1838 novel "Oliver Twist", by Charles Dickens.

Lionel Bart's "Oliver!" tells us the story of orphan Oliver (Khadijah), who has been growing up in a workhouse in Victorian England. On escaping workhouse life, he finds himself amongst a group of petty thieves and pickpockets and so begins a whirlwind adventure with lovable rogue, the Artful Dodger

(George C) under the watchful eye of small crime mastermind Fagin (Mr Painter). Will young Oliver steer clear of the long arms of the law and find the love of a family he deserves?

After months of rehearsals, the sell-out show was an outstanding success and ended in a standing ovation with multiple encores! The audience left on high spirits singing all the famous songs with lots of "oom pah pahs" to be heard in the corridors!



Reviews from the show included:

“It was wonderful! Thank you so much to all the staff who were involved. The children loved it too! So special!”

“It was absolutely fantastic! Thank you to all the musical staff who work so hard to support this group of amazingly talented and incredibly musical young people. This is what makes NCW so special.”

“It was a triumph - intimate, moving, with incredible performances. Huge congratulations to all involved, NCW at its best.”

Well done to everyone involved; students, staff and parents and carers who supported the students in more ways than one. Thank you to all audience members who donated to the charity collection which was for the Amber Trust.

We look forward to seeing what show the Musical Theatre Group take on next!



Royal Worcester Work Experience for Amy

Head Student and history fan Amy is LOVING her work experience placement at the Museum of Royal Worcester.

“I do work experience at the Museum of Royal Worcester in the city. Part of my work experience is to talk to visitors about the handling collection, a collection of Royal Worcester pieces that aren't perfect enough to showcase in the museum. These pieces, however, are perfect to feel and explore the story of Royal Worcester. I also talk about their sensory trail, which shows Royal Worcester pieces through the senses, there

are things to smell and touch. There is also a piece of writing in braille to accompany each piece. I also add to their social media to promote the work I do, including my piece of the week, where I choose one piece a week from the handling collection to talk about. I do it every Thursday afternoon, 2-4 pm and I love it! I am so lucky to have this opportunity as I would like to do a degree in history one day.”

If you are with a business that could offer a placement to one of our students - we would love to hear from you. Please contact office@ncw.co.uk, 01905 763933

Parkour comes to NCW!

As part of Year 12 Community Involvement lessons, students plan trips out into the community, developing their skills in accordance with the Curriculum Framework for the Vision Impaired: experiencing different jobs and organisations, promoting what students with VI can do, developing their ability to organise trips, make phone calls and send emails, interact with members of the public, consider safeguarding and health and safety, and more.

So far, they have visited a Martial Arts Centre, the University of Worcester Science Department, an Animal Rescue Centre, a Police Station and even had a behind the scenes tour of McDonalds! NCW student Joe wanted to explore Parkour, and, as he couldn't find a venue, he organised with the support of staff for WyreParkour to come to NCW!

The school gym was transformed and students enjoy learning how to jump and travel safely on the apparatus. Thank you to Rusty at WyreParkour!



Grade 5 Oboe success for Ellie!

Year 8 student Ellie has not only passed her Grade 5 oboe exam....but got a distinction!

Ellie is now working with Mrs Ward towards her Grade 5 Practical Musicianship exam, which will allow her to progress beyond Grade 5. Ellie is also working towards her Grade 5 piano and is learning to create compositions in MuseScore (using braille entry and screen reader) in her class music lessons.

Well done, Ellie!



Breakfast Club in the Hostel!



Students in the Sixth Form have started a weekly Breakfast Club, a chance to get together, catch up on the week and enjoy some delicious food with friends.

Last week, it was breakfast burritos and they were a HUGE hit with ALL the students! NCW student Eva took all the orders and even delivered the food to the common room. Everyone left with full tummies ready to tackle the weekend.





Worcestershire **Education** **Awards** Finalists!

If you have visited NCW or eaten in the Dining Hall, you will know that our brilliant Catering Team prepares nutritionally balanced, tasty and colourful food to tempt all palates.

We are delighted to announce that the team has been shortlisted for this year's Worcestershire Education Awards in the category of Support Staff of the Year Award. This is an award for a member of support staff, or a team of support staff, who always give exceptional service and make a real difference

to their educational establishment through their work.

The nomination really highlights the fact that the team play a really important role, not just in providing healthy, tasty food but also what they are for the students. They are always there with a friendly face; they know what students like and don't like and sometimes they can notice things going on with the students when they're in the dining room and can flag up issues where extra pastoral support could be required. They are a close-knit team, get along with each other really

well and some have been at NCW for many years. They have seen a lot of students start here as nervous, shy youngsters and leave as confident young adults and they love hearing about their successes after they have left.

Paul Cotterill, the Catering Team Manager said "It is a really great to feel appreciated – it is wonderful to know that what we do is recognised as a valued part of NCW."

The NCW Catering team L-R: Karen Holmes, Matt Lomax, Paul Cotterill (Manager), Rod Wood, Mandy McConnell

News from the **Houses!**



Wellbeing evenings in **Bradnack**

This term, students in Bradnack house have been enjoying weekly wellbeing evenings.

This has given students the chance to relax, take some time for themselves and have a little pamper session. Firm favourites have been foot spas, massage chairs and hand treatments!

We look forward to more wellbeing evenings next term!

Peggy Markes House out and about

Weekends at NCW are never boring - how can they be when there is always something going on?!


This half term Peggy's have visited All Things Wild, a local indoor and outdoor attraction with different animals and activities to experience. They've also popped along to our local brilliant garden centre at St Peter's. A chance to get off campus, explore Worcestershire, grab some fresh air and most importantly...have fun!



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