

THE CITY HERALD

FOR THE STUDENTS. BY THE STUDENTS.

NASA DISCOVERS NEW PLANETS

NASA HAS JUST MADE AN INCREDIBLE DISCOVERY: 6,000 BRAND-NEW PLANETS BEYOND OUR SOLAR SYSTEM! THESE PLANETS ARE CALLED EXOPLANETS, AND THEY ORBIT STARS FAR AWAY IN THE UNIVERSE. THAT'S 6,000 WORLDS WE NEVER KNEW EXISTED UNTIL NOW!

DHRUV | Y9

Scientists now know that planets are even more common than they once thought. Each of these new worlds is different.

Some are scorching hot.

Some are freezing cold.

Some might even have water!

Could there be life on any of them? Nobody knows yet, but researchers are eager to explore. Even the tiniest clue could teach us more about how life begins.

NASA used powerful space telescopes that watch the sky very closely. These telescopes look for tiny changes in the light of stars that can show when a planet passes in front of one. From these small changes, scientists can learn a huge amount: the size of the planet, how fast it moves, and sometimes even what its atmosphere is made of.

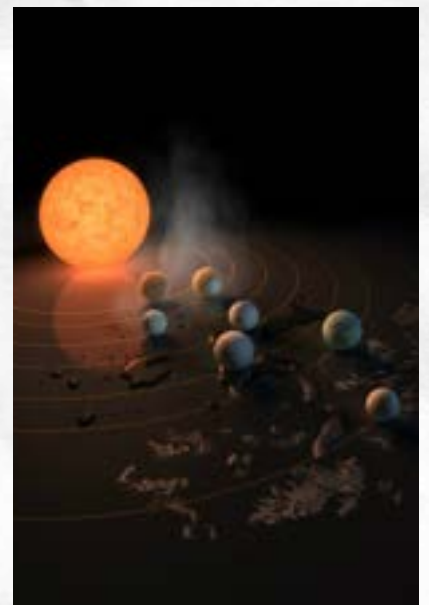
Every new planet teaches us something about how the universe works.



By studying these planets, researchers can learn how planets are formed, what makes them unique, and whether any of them could support life. Discoveries like this also inspire new technology, new missions, and new questions for future scientists to explore. One day, students reading this right now might even help study these distant worlds!

Some of the new planets are bigger than Jupiter, the largest planet in our solar system. Others are smaller than Earth!

The universe is full of surprises, and NASA's latest discovery shows just how much there is still to explore.



SPIES OR JUST BIRDS?

RYAN S / Y9
*DEBUNKING
CONSPIRACIES*

A weird rumour has been flying around online—literally—that pigeons are actually Chinese spies. Some people even claim that a pigeon had Chinese-looking letters on its wings, which got police in Mumbai involved. The bird was sent to BSDPHA for a medical check-up, and CNN has reached out to the police for comment.

PETA added that the markings on the pigeon's wings "led to suspicion of spying and caused police to seize the bird, who was sent for medical examination as part of an investigation."

Online conspiracy theories claim pigeons never blink, always seem t

o be watching, and often gather in suspicious patterns. Others say their strange cooing sounds could be coded messages, or that their ability to fly in large groups makes them perfect for surveillance.



ome even argue that pigeons are everywhere, in cities and near government buildings, which apparently makes them "too convenient to be real."

But honestly... pigeons still mostly act like pigeons. They eat constantly, waddle around, lose feathers everywhere, and baby pigeons grow up just like any other bird. Some of them are even kind of fat, and you can clearly see their flesh and feathers. Basically, nothing about them screams "government drone."

Here at our school, pigeons are known to fly into the building, get stuck in the Green Hub, steal our chips, and cause general chaos. If these are secret spy drones, they're doing a terrible job

ARE PIGEONS WATCHING YOU?



For now, the safest conclusion seems to be: pigeons are just pigeons. Slightly annoying, sometimes cute, and a bit mysterious, but not secret agents with flashing red lights... at least, we hope not.

If you have a conspiracy theory that you'd like us to debunk, get it touch.



IN YOUR SHOES: *A TEACHER'S VIEW*

by Miss Mirza

You might not always talk about it, but anxiety is something many students deal with, whether it's before a test, starting a new class, or figuring out where you fit in. As a teacher, I see those worried looks, shaky hands, and quiet sighs every day. And here's something I want you to understand from the beginning: feeling anxious doesn't mean there's something wrong with you. It means you're growing, learning, and facing real challenges.

Anxiety often shows up when you're stepping into something unfamiliar. Your heart might beat faster, your stomach might twist, and suddenly everything feels heavier than it should. But here's the surprising part: these uncomfortable moments can actually help you build confidence.

Confidence isn't a trait you're born with - it's a skill you develop. Think of it like training for a sport or practicing an instrument. You don't get good overnight, and you certainly don't get good by avoiding challenges. Confidence grows every time you take a step - big or small- outside your comfort zone.

A lot of students think confident people never feel nervous. Trust me, adults and teachers feel it too.

The difference is that confident people don't let that nervous feeling stop them. So how can you grow through anxiety instead of letting it hold you back? Start by breaking big tasks into small, manageable steps. If speaking up feels scary, try sharing one idea. If a project feels too big, start with ten minutes of work. Celebrate those small victories; they stack up quickly. And remember to be kind to yourself.

Growing up means figuring things out bit by bit, and it takes real courage to keep going. You don't need to be perfect- just willing to try again.

As your teachers, we want you to remember this: anxiety doesn't mean you can't succeed. It means you're on the edge of becoming stronger. Keep going - you're doing better than you think.



TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

FOR EACH EDITION OF THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER, WE WILL SHINE A SPOTLIGHT UNDER SOME OF OUR TEACHERS. TODAY, WE INTERVIEW MS SATTAR, HEAD OF YEAR 7. IF YOU WANT YOUR FAVOURITE TEACHER UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT NEXT -

EMAIL US AT HERALD@TCOLC.ASPIRELP.UK



MS SATTAR

JAVERIA: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON PINEAPPLE ON PIZZA?

MS. SATTAR: I DON'T LIKE THEM TOGETHER; I PREFER TO EAT THEM SEPARATELY.

JAVERIA: WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE SUBJECT WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD?

MS. SATTAR: MY FAVOURITE SUBJECT WAS PE.

JAVERIA: IF YOU COULD LIVE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, WHERE WOULD IT BE?

MS. SATTAR: I WOULD LIVE IN ANY HOT COUNTRY.

JAVERIA: IF THE WORLD WAS ENDING, WHAT WOULD YOU CHOOSE AS YOUR LAST MEAL?

MS. SATTAR: I WOULD CHOOSE PASTA.

JAVERIA: WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT CHIPS DIPPED IN ICE CREAM?

MS. SATTAR: I DON'T LIKE THEM TOGETHER.

JAVERIA: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

MS. SATTAR: I WOULD TELL MYSELF TO ENJOY EVERY MOMENT AND TO CREATE MORE MEMORIES.

JAVERIA: IF YOU WEREN'T A TEACHER, WHAT JOB WOULD YOU CHOOSE?

MS. SATTAR: I WOULD BE A BUSINESS OWNER.

A vertical banner with a pink background. It features several school-related icons: a DNA helix at the top, an atom with a blue nucleus and three electrons, a blue and pink backpack, a blue flask with a yellow liquid, an open book with blue lines, a blue pencil, and a paper with 'A+' grades. There are also some abstract shapes and dots scattered around.

MS. SATTAR: FIRST, I PET MY CAT. THEN I DRINK SOME WATER, TAKE A SHOWER, GET DRESSED, AND LEAVE HOME. AFTER THAT, I DROP OFF MY DAUGHTER AND COME TO WORK.



WHEN YOUTUBE MEETS YOUR TASTE BUDS. TESTING NIKO'S SHADES ONE BITE AT A TIME

YOUTUBE STAR NIKO OMILANA LAUNCHES SHADES CONFECTIONERY BRAND

Okay, so Niko's sweets Shades officially dropped this year, and obviously we at The City Herald had to test them out. I mean, journalism requires sacrifices, right? So yes, we ate an entire bag. Or like... five.



First impressions: the packaging is cool, but honestly we opened it so fast none of us even remember what it looked like because we were too busy arguing over who got the first sour one.

Now onto the flavours. Our reviews were, uh... mixed. The sour flavours were basically the most popular, and most of the team loved them so much that we had to start rationing them because apparently "professionalism" means not fighting your coworkers for the green ones.

The tropical flavours had some fans too (shoutout to the three people who kept yelling "I taste pineapple!!" like it was life-changing). Miss Mirza tried them too and said her favourite was the green sour ones, which she described as "dangerously tasty."

But she did say that Niko really needs to work on the shapes because some of them "did not look like shades at all." And honestly... she's right. One looked like a squished bug. Another looked like a sad potato wearing tiny glasses. We still ate them though. he taste overall? Imagine if a rainbow exploded in your mouth but in a good way. The sour ones hit you with that instant cheek-tightening zing that makes you question your life decisions for a second, and then you immediately want another. The tropical ones were kinda like going on holiday, but only for two seconds, and then you remember you're actually in maths.

Final verdict: 9/10 if you like sour stuff, 7/10 if you're into tropical vibes, 10/10 if you'll eat literally anything gummy-shaped. Also, Niko, if you're reading this: great job, but please fix the ones that look like depressed vegetables. We will happily test future flavours. For research purposes.

If you'd like us to review more snacks, let us know herald@tcolc.aspirelp.uk



THE WAR OF THE GAMES



GAMERS HAVE BEEN ARGUING FOREVER: WHAT'S THE BEST GAME EVER? IF WE LOOK AT THE NUMBERS, THE TOP 10 DOWNLOADED GAMES ARE →

The top three—Minecraft, Roblox, and Fortnite—have been battling for the crown forever. But recently, new games shook things up. First came Grow a Garden. Everyone was hooked. Minecraft's most popular server, Mineplex, only had 33,000 players per hour... but Grow a Garden hit 5 million per hour! Madness. Then Steal a Brain-Rot dropped, and everything changed. This game is intense: players collect brains from opponents, level up their characters, and battle in massive "instance fights." Fast action, smart strategy,

and teamwork made it explode in popularity. Grow a Garden didn't stand a chance and was deleted. So who's really the best? Minecraft and Roblox are still legends, but games like Grow a Garden and Steal a Brain-Rot prove the gaming world can flip overnight. One thing's for sure: if you blink, you might miss the next big hit.



1. **Minecraft** – 96.8M
2. **Roblox** – 94.9M
3. **Fortnite** – 60.3M
4. **GTA V** – 48.1M
5. **League of Legends** – 40.6M
6. **Garena Free Fire** – 35.3M
7. **Valorant** – 31M
8. **Genshin Impact** – 28.4M
9. **PUBG** – 24.2M
10. **Brawl Stars** – 20.4M

GAME OVER



The Things I Don't Say

There are words I keep folded,

Like letters I never send.

The weight of almost,

The ache of nearly.

I smile when I should cry,

Because the world prefers neat ending

But inside,

There's a storm that never learned,

How to rain gently.

Some nights I whisper in the dark,

Not just for answers-

Just to be heard

But something that won't turn away.

And maybe that's enough -

To breathe,

To feel,

To exist quietly,

In a world that always doesn't seem to

listen.

teachers Pet



An addition to The City Herald that seems to be a crowd favourite is when we get to meet our teacher's favourite friends. In this addition, we get to meet Mr Bifield's guinea pigs. If you would like to see a teacher's pet or you know a teacher that would love to share - please let us know herald@tcolc.aspirelp.uk

Coco & Popcorn

Anglee: How old are your guinea pigs and also what is the age and gender?

Mr Bifield: Coco is 6 years old and Popcorn is about 3 years old. Both are female.

Anglee: What do your guinea pigs like and dislike?

Mr Bifield: What is there not to like about guinea pigs? It would be great if they were a little bit more friendly but as they are outdoor guinea pigs, they don't get handled a lot which makes them less tame than maybe indoor guinea pigs are. One of the best things about them is feeding time, they are so funny when you go to give them food as they are always so desperate to eat (they love vegetables!). Also, in the summer, they go outside on the grass and they love this. When guinea pigs do something they love they do something called 'popcorn' which is basically jumping up and running around - this is really funny to watch. I just wish they were a little bit more friendly.

Anglee: What breeds are your guinea pigs?

Mr Bifield: Coco is a crested pig and Popcorn is a teddy.

Anglee: Why did you decide to get guinea pigs?

Mr Bifield: My wife decided to buy them for my son's 10th birthday. Now he is 16, he's not so interested in them, so they seem to have become my wife's pet.

Anglee: What would they eat?

Mr Bifield: They love hay, grass and almost any vegetable but especially lettuce.

Anglee: Who is your favorite guinea pig?

Mr Bifield: Coco as she has been with us the longest, she is the most cute and she has funny traits that make me laugh after a tough day at work.

Anglee: What is the typical day in a life for your guinea pigs?

Mr Bifield: Eat, sleep repeat!

MOVIE PLOTS THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN (BUT WE STILL WATCH)

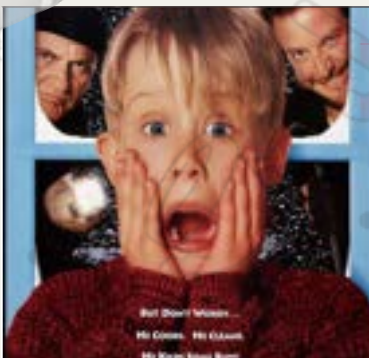
IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN, HOT CHOCOLATE, FAIRY LIGHTS, AND... CHRISTMAS MOVIES. BUT LET'S BE REAL: HOW MANY OF THESE PLOTS ACTUALLY MAKE SENSE? SPOILER ALERT: NOT MANY. AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHY WE LOVE THEM.

TAKE HOME ALONE. KEVIN GETS LEFT HOME ALONE AND SOMEHOW TURNS HIS HOUSE INTO A DEATH TRAP FOR BURGLARS. REALISTIC? NOPE. HILARIOUS? 100%. ALSO, MY PARENTS WOULD NEVER LET ME DO THAT.

OR LOVE ACTUALLY, WHERE LITERALLY EVERYONE IN LONDON FALLS IN LOVE AT THE SAME TIME, WITH DRAMATIC AIRPORT RUNS AND PERFECTLY TIMED CONFESSIONS. IN REAL LIFE, PEOPLE CAN'T EVEN TEXT BACK IN TIME, LET ALONE MEET SOMEONE MID-AIRPORT WITH A BOOMBOX.

THEN THERE'S ELF AND THE CHRISTMAS CHRONICLES; NORTH POLE ADVENTURES, SANTA SLEIGH RIDES, AND CONVINCING WHOLE CITIES THAT SANTA IS REAL. YEAH... NOT HAPPENING. BUT THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT MAGICAL. IT'S LIKE SUGAR, SNOW, AND HOLIDAY GLITTER ALL ROLLED INTO ONE. SOME MOVIES, THOUGH, DO HIT TOO CLOSE TO HOME. FAMILY DRAMA, LAST-MINUTE CHRISTMAS DINNER CHAOS, OR TRYING TO UNTANGLE FAIRY LIGHTS WITHOUT BURNING THE HOUSE DOWN? VERY REAL. AND PAINFULLY RELATABLE.

SO YES, MOST CHRISTMAS MOVIE PLOTS ARE TOTALLY UNREALISTIC, BUT THAT'S THE FUN PART. THEY MAKE YOU LAUGH, CRY, AND GET TOTALLY INTO THE FESTIVE SPIRIT. AND HONESTLY, ISN'T THAT WHAT CHRISTMAS IS ALL ABOUT?



best film of all time?

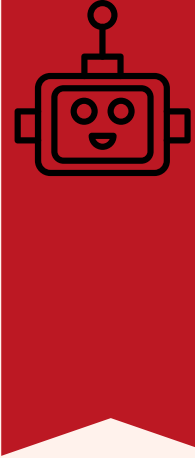


does Santa sleigh?



elf

AI UNLEASHES RECORD-BREAKING DAD JOKES, CAUSING MASS EYE ROLLS AND GIGGLES



In a shocking turn of events, ChatGPT has released a batch of ten dad jokes so pun-tastic, they've been classified as "dangerously groan-inducing". Eyewitnesses report uncontrollable laughter followed by sighs of disbelief.

THE TOP TEN DAD JOKES CAUSING A STIR

1. Why did the scarecrow win an award? Because he was outstanding in his field.
2. I only know 25 letters of the alphabet... I don't know y.
3. Why don't skeletons fight each other? They don't have the guts.
4. I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down.
5. Why did the coffee file a police report? It got mugged.
6. How do you organize a space party? You planet.
7. What do you call fake spaghetti? An impasta.
8. Why did the math book look sad? It had too many problems.
9. I would tell you a joke about construction... but I'm still working on it.
10. Why can't your nose be 12 inches long? Because then it would be a foot.

**EXPERTS WARN:
"EXPOSURE MAY RESULT
IN SUDDEN LAUGHTER,
GROANS, OR THE
UNCONTROLLABLE URGE
TO SHARE THESE JOKES
WITH FRIENDS, FAMILY,
OR UNSUSPECTING
STRANGERS."**



School headteachers are reportedly preparing a "Dad Joke Safety Plan" to prevent mass disruptions in classrooms. Meanwhile, students are already practicing their best groans in anticipation of widespread deployment.



Did the Herald really write this article, or did ChatGPT sneak in with its dad jokes? We want to hear what you think! Send your thoughts, guesses, or groans to herald@tcolc.aspirelp.uk and join the fun.

GUESS THE TEACHER

This edition newspaper features a fun challenge for all students: **Guess the Teacher!** We've included photographs of several staff members from their childhood days, and your job is to figure out which teacher each picture belongs to.

Take a close look at their faces, their expressions, and even their style, you might be surprised at how many teachers looked completely different when they were younger! Some might be easy to recognise, while others may leave you scratching your head.

Email us your guesses for each photo and then in a few weeks time, we'll let you know how many you got right. Good luck - and may the best detective win!





SUBJECT SPOTLIGHT

Each edition, we will highlight a subject at TCOLC, exploring the work and passion behind it. For our first issue featuring this segment, we chose the Expressive Arts department.

After the success of *Matilda Jr.*, the upcoming auditions for *Aladdin the Musical*, and numerous other exciting events, it was clear that Expressive Arts deserved the spotlight. We spoke with Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Hurdley about their experiences working in this vibrant subject.

How do you like working in this subject?

Mrs. Wright: I love working within Performing Arts. Personally, I have always enjoyed acting and dancing myself, so the fact that I get to share this enthusiasm with young people every day is just great!

Mrs. Hurdley: I love it! I think every day how lucky I am to spend my days sharing my passion with other people. I loved music at school; it was one of the few subjects I really enjoyed, and I love that I get to help young people enjoy it too.

How did the production go?

Mrs. Wright: The production exceeded my expectations. During the final rehearsals, I said to the cast that I was worried. I was not worried because I thought it wouldn't be good... I was worried because the final rehearsals went SO well—how could they top this during the live performances? And they did...!

Mrs. Hurdley: I think it far exceeded our expectations! Everybody, from the cast to the tech teams, to the designers, everybody just really excelled themselves! I got goosebumps in the rehearsals listening to the singers, and although it was hard work, it was so worth it to see the joy that the pupils got out of doing it.

What are your thoughts on the next production that has been voted on?

Mrs. Wright: I am excited to see TCOLC's students take on the challenge and also put their own spin on *Aladdin Jr.*

Mrs. Hurdley: I'm excited to be doing *Aladdin* next year! I don't know it very well myself, so I will need to learn it too—but there's already lots of excitement around the upcoming auditions!

What qualities are you looking for in actors/actresses for the lead roles?

Mrs. Wright: Commitment for us is the biggest quality. When a person commits, we can support them in working hard to perform to the best of their ability and really showing everyone what they are made of!

Mrs. Hurdley: Confidence and talent, but more than anything, commitment! There's lots of extra hours to be put in, learning lines, dances, rehearsals, and it doesn't matter how good you are—if you can't commit to it, there's no point doing it.

What made you want to be a teacher in Expressive Arts?

Mrs. Wright: In all honesty, my GCSE Dance teacher was not that inspiring, and I felt I wanted to do better and to promote the Arts to young people more than they ever did.

Mrs. Hurdley: I loved all the Arts at school, especially Art and Music. But we had an especially amazing music teacher who ran a school jazz band, which I played the saxophone in. It was the only thing I really loved when I was a teenager, and that was a huge part of me wanting to study Music after I left school. Being a teacher is amazing as you get to share your own passion and enthusiasm with others, and hopefully also be the teacher that people remember!

Along with the production, what else is coming up for the subject?

Mrs. Wright: Keep an eye out on TCOLC news, but Mrs. Hurdley and the Drama Club are launching the Winter Fundraiser, happening over lunchtimes on Tuesday 9th and Wednesday 10th, and after school on Friday 12th December. They are raising money for such important charities and have been working on this for months.

Mrs. Hurdley: We have some shows over Christmas which are super exciting. Auditions for Aladdin will be held early in the new year, so that's something really exciting to look forward to.

Did you have any worries or think something might go wrong in the show?

Mrs. Wright: YES! A lot of sleepless nights were had before the show.

Mrs. Hurdley: Yes! Always! But honestly, I needn't have worried!

What some great answers! If you would like to nominate a subject for the next issue of The City Herald, please email us at herald@tcolc.aspirelp.uk



WITH MISS MIRZA
3:20PM-4:00PM | G17

THE CITY HERALD

FOR THE STUDENTS. BY THE STUDENTS.



AN OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO RAISE
OUR VOICES, SHARE OUR CONCERNS
AND ENGAGE WITH OUR COMMUNITY.



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