

# TERM

SPRING EDITION

## DIGITAL DETOX

THE WEEK WE UNPLUGGED



**8** UNMISTAKABLE  
HOUSE PARTY INDIVIDUALS

**DON'T**  
UNDERESTIMATE ME.  
INVESTIGATING GENDER TERMS

***OUR*** GUARDIAN  
**ANGEL**

*Gaming Releases*  
**2016**





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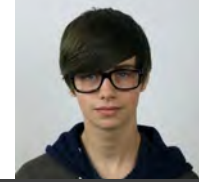
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## Term Contents

- Pg 2** A Tribute to George *by Owen Tyrie*
- Pg 3** The 8 Biggest Gaming Releases of 2016 *by James White*
- Pg 5** For the Love of Cars *by Olivia Pointon*
- Pg 6** Best Place to live in Britain? *by Matty Davies*
- Pg 7** Introducing Our Guardian Angel: Mrs Everton  
*by Olivia Gregory*
- Pg 9** No Instagram? No Snapchat? No Twitter? No, thanks.  
*by Olivia Taylor*
- Pg 11** Is Social Media Controlling Our World? *by James Burnett*
- Pg 12** A Diary of Learning to Love Lent *by Sophie Clayton*
- Pg 13** 8 Unmistakable House Party Individuals *by Sam Roberts*
- Pg 14** Do you speak Prada? *by Annaliese Taylor*
- Pg 15** The DofE Dilemma *by Eilidh Bodfish*
- Pg 16** Don't Underestimate Me *by Emilie Reed*
- Pg 17** It's Time to Talk about Mental Health *by Faye Maloney*
- Pg 18** The Inadequacy of Sex Ed *by Olivia Gregory*
- Pg 19** Why Writing an Article for a Sixth Form Magazine is so  
Daunting *by Rhiannon Price*
- Pg 19** Saying Goodbye *by Maddie Berry and Annabelle Moss*

## Hella & Welcome

...To the fourth edition of Term, the Sixth Form magazine written, designed, and put together by students. For this edition, the Year 13s handed over their beloved magazine to the trusty hands of the Year 12s— but don't fear; they stuck around to give a helping hand, alleviate anxieties and provide us with illuminating articles. In this edition we pay tribute to our old friend and former student George Heath, challenge the sexist gender norms of today's society and reflect on our experiences of the Digital Detox. We also evaluate the true significance of DofE, and look at the importance of deconstructing the stigma surrounding Mental Health. We've kept it diverse to make sure we've got something for all of you, so please peruse at your leisure.

*Enjoy*

*Olivia Taylor— Editor*



# It's been a long day, without you my friend...

By Owen Tyrie



My fondest memory with George was when my family and his all went away to celebrate New Year. It was on the dawn of the New Year when George and I found what looked to be a big damp slope outside our cottage. To most kids it just looked like a steep hill, however we were not most kids...

To us it was a gigantic mudslide to fly down over and over again until it was time for bed.

So, without any strict adult supervision, we ran for the hill and spent all evening diving down this dirty brown natural slip n' slide, feeling like two energetic springer spaniel pups. After many hours of mud sliding we decided to call it an evening, so we made the long trek back up the hill, knocked on the cottage door and were met with two rather shocked mothers. "DON'T STEP INSIDE, DON'T STEP INSIDE" our mums shouted as we smiled innocently as if we had done nothing wrong.



We were bathed, our muddy clothes were shoved straight into the washing machine and we proceeded to sit down with everyone else to fall asleep on the sofa concluding what had been the best New Year's Eve of my life. It still has that top spot to this day! It's nights like this which I will remember for the rest of my life.

George was so well known in our small village. He worked in the famous chippy, King Loui's, and would always serve with a smile and be up for a chat with anyone. No one served chips like George, however his brother, Harry, came a close second. For those who knew him personally you'll join me in agreeing that he was indeed a lovable cheeky chappie. This trait stayed with him throughout his tragically short life from when he was acting out Lord of the Rings battles in the forest with sticks as swords, to his student days studying Journalism at Staffordshire Uni. He would always be the first person

to try something daft and this did often land him in A&E, however it was never enough to stop him from trying again.

Hearing the news about George was heart-breaking and it came as such a shock to everyone who knew him. When we were younger, he was like a brother, along with Harry, to Jack (my actual brother) and I. We spent many, many weekends away with the Heath family, whether we were camping in North Wales, Youth Hostelling in the Yorkshire Dales, cottage holidays throughout the UK or simply having a BBQ in the garden. Whatever we did, George was always the muddiest and wettest of the gang. He was a huge part of my childhood and I have lots of wonderful memories of times spent with him.

George was an absolutely top guy who will be missed by everyone who knew him.

Rest in Peace, George.



*The George Heath Memorial Fundraiser raised over £7000 and will happen again next year. A bench and a trust fund is being set up in his memory.*





# The 8 Biggest Gaming Releases of 2016

By James White



Whilst 2015 was an exciting year for gamers, 2016 is shaping up to be even better. Many highly anticipated PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One, 3DS and Wii U titles are set to release very soon, and so, in order of release date, here are the 8 that you should be the most excited for this year.

## Dark Souls III

The *Dark Souls* series is notorious for its rage-inducing difficulty, and the newest entry into the series will be no different. Drawing inspiration from its highly successful spiritual successor, *Bloodborne*, *Souls 3* will feature a much faster paced gameplay compared to the bulky sword-and-shield feel of the original games. Players will still be presented with the classic *Souls* formula: vast and open expanses with many different paths leading to the land's many locations, colossal enemies, a variety of classes and builds to boost replayability, and of course, bone-shattering difficulty levels designed to make you question the very reason you decided to sit down and play a *Dark Souls* game.

**Platforms:** PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC

**Release Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016

## Battleborn

Being the only game from this list that I've had the chance to play already, I can only fuel the hype. From the creators of *Borderlands*, *Battleborn* reinvents the multiplayer FPS PvE formula, bringing a whopping 25 unique characters into the fray at release, each with their own unique strengths, weaknesses and team roles to adapt to. For example, players could choose to control Phoebe, a m  e-based offensive character wielding a multitude of telekinetically suspended rapiers, or Marquis, Phoebe's ex-sociopathic robot butler who can use his collapsible sniper rifle to deal with enemies from afar. With Gearbox's signature bonkers action sequences and a cast more colourful than a gay pride parade, *Battleborn* has built its self up to be one of 2016's most memorable titles.

**Platforms:** PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC

**Release Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016

## Uncharted 4: A Thief's End

The final title to enter Naughty Dog's beloved series of PlayStation exclusives, *Uncharted 4* will follow the antics of now-retired fortune hunter Nathan Drake as he embarks on a globe-trotting adventure one last time. After settling in to a normal life with his wife Elena Fisher, Drake's world is turned upside down as his long-lost brother Sam reappears, seeking Nate's help. Together, they embark on a journey to uncover the conspiracy behind the long lost pirate colony Libertalia and its fabled fortune in lost pirate treasure. *Uncharted 4* will include the same story-driven third-person shooter action familiar from previous titles, as well as an online multiplayer mode similar to that seen in *Uncharted 3*. Whether you're a series veteran like myself or a newcomer thirsty for epic settings and death-defying traversals, *Uncharted 4* could bring one of the year's best stories to the table.

**Platforms:** PlayStation 4

**Release Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> May 2016

## Doom

Being the first entry into the series since *Doom 3* in 2004, 2016's *Doom* reboot has a hefty legacy to live up to. Featuring "badass demons, big effing guns, and moving really fast" as key principles in the game, *Doom* keeps the same FPS action as the originals, but with a facelift. As *Doom* puts emphasis on speed and momentum, the game allows players to sprint and double jump, a combat system named by the developers as "push forward combat". This means that players are discouraged from taking cover to regenerate health, and therefore there will be no cover or natural health regeneration mechanics. If



speed, blood and ungodly amounts of first person violence make your heart beat, chances are that *Doom* is exactly what you've been looking for.

**Platforms:** PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC

**Release Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016

### Fire Emblem Fates: Conquest & Birthright

Already a huge hit in Japan and the United States, *Fire Emblem Fates* further elaborates on what fans already love about the iconic tactical turn-based RPG series. This time, players will be the soul protagonist, instead of a secondary protagonist as in *Fire Emblem Awakening*. Set in feudal Japan, players become a young royal born into one family, Hoshido, but raised by another, Nohr. Players will be presented with the difficult decision of whom to side with early in the game, and this decision heavily affects the story which we will see unfold. In short, this means that in the two editions available at launch, there are two completely different stories to be experienced. As if this wasn't already enough, a third path will be available to anyone who has both versions of the game – telling the story of what happens when you side with neither Hoshido nor Nohr. Grid-based tactics don't come any better than this.

**Platforms:** PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC

**Release Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016

### Overwatch

Having been in a worldwide-closed beta since October 2015, many eagerly await the official release of Blizzard's newest multiplayer title. Unveiled almost two years ago, the game emphasises co-operative team based PvP gameplay using a cast of heroes, each with their own abilities and team roles falling under the umbrellas of offence, defence, support and tank. Teams will need to formulate strategies to outwit their foes, and as a core game mechanic, heroes will greatly influence how a team performs in different situations. Battles play out as six-vs-six bouts focused around different game modes, though currently only 'point capture', 'escort' and 'control' are available to beta players. Many were sceptical at first, but Blizzard seems to have finally accomplished something great outside of the MMORPG genre, and it looks like *Overwatch* really will be this year's FPS of choice.

**Platforms:** PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC

**Release Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016



### Monster Hunter Generations

While on the surface *Generations* may look the same as the last two 3DS *Monster Hunter* titles, there is a whole lot going for the newest entry into the hit series. Known as *Monster Hunter X* in Japan, this game will feature all-new hunting styles and arts for each of the 14 different weapon types. Besides the classic Guild style, now able to use two hunting arts, hunters will be able to choose from the Striker style to maximise the number of arts available, Adept (or Bushido) style to gain access to special attacks as a reward for perfect evades, and Aerial style, granting the ability to vault off monsters to land devastating blows from above. The game also includes a bigger monster roster than ever before, bringing back fan favourites from every main series *monster hunter* game to date like 3's flagship *Lagiacrus*, or the sorely missed *Nargacuga*. With big weapons and even bigger monsters, *Monster Hunter Generations* may become 2016's defining multiplayer co-op experience.

**Platforms:** 3DS

**Release Date:** Summer 2016

### The Witcher 3: Blood and Wine

While it may not be a full game, the final expansion to CD Project Red's behemoth game-of-the-year masterpiece *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* is bound to make a splash. Bringing 20 hours' worth of new gameplay, including new quests, armour, weapons and horse gear, the DLC pack will feature an all-new region: Toussaint. Toussaint is said to be peaceful; however, the knights in the area are allegedly hiding an age-old secret behind a bloody ritual. What the ritual is, we don't yet know, but players may be able to find out at the rumoured release date of April 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Platforms:** PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC

**Release Date:** TBC 2016 (Rumoured April 26<sup>th</sup>)

# For the Love of Cars

By Olivia Pointon

From the fateful day I entered this world, I was destined to be totally and utterly beyond infatuated by cars. There was no question about it; it was in my blood - my mother had grown up around cars and I was sure I would follow in her footsteps. Before I started primary school I knew how to change an oil filler, repair a cam belt and could tell by the sound whether it was a Milltek or a Madx Out exhaust system. Everything was great, I enjoyed car 'meet ups' and race days at the track. Nothing could stop me... or could it?

*"That's right, ladies and gentlemen, I was born the wrong gender."*

I guess I spoke too soon because that's right, ladies and gentlemen, I was born the wrong gender. I wasn't supposed to be mesmerised by the curves of the bonnet, or the sound of a dump valve as it shifted from one gear to another. I was supposed to like make up and dolls and all the things normal little girls were supposed to be interested in. I guess it was all downhill from there. I would never grow up to be a mechanic or a racing driver like I had once believed I would in my heart; instead I'd grow up being mocked by silly little boys who taunted me with phrases like "What do you know about cars, you're just a girl?" or to pass my driving test, only to be told "Sweetie, isn't it better if I drive?" But this isn't some soppy, tragic, heart-wrenching story about my traumatic ordeal. No, this is me, embracing my inner car enthusiast.

Watch out world, I've got my sassy pants on.

Don't get me wrong, just because I can tell the difference between the pull of a 4x4 engine and your average turbo diesel injection doesn't make me any less of a woman. In fact, I have come to love my inner girly-girl, so when I do my makeup and take 30 minutes to curl my bloody hair, I do not care that you do not notice. But, when you make fun of the way I stop listening to you and start staring at the brand new F-Type Jaguar that just drove past it does not make me laugh, it makes me want to punch you in the face.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not judging you for not

knowing the difference between a P1 and an LP40 - because honestly, only saddos like us do - but I would appreciate it a little more if, when I get excited about the fact that the new FOCUS RS COMES OUT IN ONLY A FEW MONTHS, you don't decide to turn around and say "For the love of Christ, will you be quiet?" I mean, I do not get angry at you for being in a mood when some stupid team lose some stupid game requiring 22 men, a bag of air and 90 minutes on a pitch that's way too manicured for my liking - it's grass, for God's sake - (for the more mentally challenged of us, I'm talking about football).



Photo by Matty Davies

I often wonder what it would have been like to actually pay attention to those lessons on a late Monday afternoon instead of surfing through AutoTrader and hunting for my 'lottery' car, drooling over RS3's and Lamborghini Aventadors. I swear I was only doing it to keep myself motivated, or at least, that's what I used to tell myself. The only thing I cared about was how much torque the new range Rover SVR had, or how long it would take to do 0-60, or what the new Bugatti Chiron would top out at - not the in-depth detail of how to solve an exponential equation.

At the end of the day, I know that reading this article won't change your mind-set about girls and cars because, in your opinion, the only correlations between the two are some hot soapy water, a tiny bikini and your girlfriend cleaning your machine, but I guess we'll leave that up to your imagination and your 'special time.' I'm just trying to prove that we're not as bad as you say we are - we can drive, we can park and we can most certainly whoop your ass in a 1/4 mile race so please, for your own sake, do *not* underestimate us.



# Best Place to Live in Britain?

By Matty Davies



At The Sunday Times they've been scouring the nation in search of the "Best Places to Live in Britain". Part of their search investigated just what we have to offer here in the North West. After taking a peak at Cumbria and some outlying Manchester towns they eventually got to Tarporley. Calling us "perennially popular" after stating that "village life isn't always easy to find in the Northwest's Range Rover belt" shows Tarporley is an exception to the rule.

Exclaiming that living in Tarporley is "Rural life for the smart set" The Sunday Times didn't mention that our home is not simply a village for school mums and Hunter wellies but a village with a 'cultural diversity' of its own, as we're one of the few places home to both Dairy Farmers and CEOs of international corporations; their children (that's us) all reside in harmony in "Top-notch state schools". They casually report that "You can buy a country pile for £1m and a delightful red-brick townhouse for £550,000". The Times seemed to glaze over the fact that we're not all high rollers, only briefly mentioning that on the "outskirts" of Tarporley "new-builds are springing up starting at £300,000".

The piece on Tarporley was short and sweet, placing us at Number 11 on the list, nine spots below our larger Roman friend, Chester, which was awarded Number 2. The majority of the piece was sound, however their "What the locals say" section was amusing to read as apparently we possess the saying "Tally ho!" in our dialect. Living in Tarporley for the entirety of my life - almost eighteen years - I can assure you that I have never heard "Tally ho!" exclaimed anywhere in or around the village. If I was to hear it I'd probably assume that particular individual was looking for directions back to the Home Counties.

Although the piece mentioned great points about our community feel, they only briefly mentioned our awesome geography, referring to Chester and the motorway but missing out that we can get to Manchester and Liverpool easily. We can go for a day trip to Alton Towers; we can do The Blue Planet Aquarium and Chester Zoo and be back in time for tea. We can get to Crewe Station within 30 minutes, giving us access to every Virgin line in the UK; Tarporley to London is just over two hours away, whilst Edinburgh is just under four.

We can travel down to Water World in Stoke-on-Trent or up to the Wirral for a visit to the practically tropical beach of West Kirby whenever we please.

Overall, it was great that Tarporley was recognised by the Sunday Times; I agree it is one of the best places to live in the country. The village is home to lovely people; it's idyllic to live in, it's in a great location and it's home to an Ofsted outstanding school with an award-winning student magazine. However, I can't imagine that whoever visited from London tried to park on the High Street or send a text...



*Sunday Times Home Supplement, 19/3/16. The article focused on 'Best Places to live in the North West.'*



# Introducing Our Guardian Angel: Mrs Everton

By Olivia Gregory



With the pressure of deadlines and essay hand-ins piling up, every now and then (or in my case, every twenty minutes), it's nice to have a natter and get some things off your chest, and who better person to unload on than the Lady in the Cupboard, Mrs Everton. It is a fact universally acknowledged that Mrs Everton has done more miles around this very school than Paula Radcliffe has in her entire career. It's an honour to have her as the first female feature (although who else would we choose?)

Upon arrival, the mandatory set up was established. The kettle was on (cup of tea, middle of the road with the milk, no sugar), Adele's internet breaker 'Hello' on in the background. I believe the perfect atmosphere was established for a good 'ole catch-up.

*Hello, it's me...*

Talking to Miss Everton is a breeze, unless it's about J-Lowe... then she just scowls. Nah, just kidding (we love you really J-Lowe!). However, the difficulty of talking about J-Lowe's departure and Nuttall's entrance is a crowd splitter: a great predecessor and a great replacement. For Everton? Another pain in the arse who's bound to create hassle one way or the other...

We also ended up chatting about lighting (who knows how), but seriously Mr Lowe, next time you leave your office for the umpteenth meeting of the day, please switch off the lights. You're killing the polar bears... SINGLE HANDEDLY.

To the Year 12s, I hope you've all settled in by now and are just about surviving. May the odds be ever in your favour. Clearly Mrs Everton is hiding her true opinions here (although enthusiastic is always seen as a negative cover-up adjective). Big is certainly true. Every year the number of students in the Sixth Form swells, but seven months in and it still feels like you can barely get near the Common Room at lunch and break.





To the old Year 13s, the time has come to start making actual decisions on UCAS. UCAS is NEVER your friend. But if there's one thing that can be said, it's that Mrs Everton is the Zen Master of making sure you end up happy somewhere. Move over Kelly Holmes, there's a new Dame in the house.

So, without further ado, here she is, our Guardian Angel: Mrs Everton...

**O: So, obviously our dear J-Lowe has departed...**

*E: (Cuts in)... J-who!? No! We do miss him around the Sixth Form, but a new era dawns and Mr Nuttall is a fantastic replacement! But we all know that the Sixth Form and I are J-Lowe's first and only love!*

**Who makes the best cups of tea out of the two?**

*Mr Nuttall's never made me one, so I'll have to say J-Lowe, because at least he did make me the odd one. Other than that it's you or George Nuttall. So maybe Nuttall Jnr.*

**At least there's a representative for the family. On the continued topic of Mr Nuttall: the colour of his office.**

*It's disgusting.*

**Who paints an office that colour!?**

*Exactly! It's got that horrible baby sick colour on the walls and that black trim... He also sits in the dark, bizarrely!*

**So what colour would you have painted the office?**

*Well I like light colours so I would have kept it how it was.*

**But he has joined us, along with the Year 12s. What are your views on them?**

*They're big, they're busy, and they're enthusiastic. Yeah, I love 'em.*

**And the Year 13s... UCAS. Well under way. Clearly very stressful. How do you keep it together?!**

*It's hard to keep it together, because everybody has different needs and are at different stages. I just keep working my way through UCAS forms, because I want everyone to have the same experience at university, so we have to make it right. You know how stressful it all was, but once it's gone, it's such a relief and you can get back to your studies.*

**You are The Master of the editing process of UCAS applications. How long did it take for you to feel confident in your editing skills?**

*Ooh. A good couple of years. It just takes a bit of time and experience. It was hard editing for subjects that are obscure. I prefer editing for English and History applications.*

**Sixth Form also promotes apprenticeships and Gap Years, of which you yourself are a fan. As a final question, what's the ideal destination?**

*Now you're talking! South East Asia, but I love Africa as well.*





# No Instagram? No Snapchat? No Twitter? No, thanks.

By Olivia Taylor

## Digital Detox: A week without technology

When I was approached by an English teacher at school and asked to give up social media for a week, then write about how I found it, it took everything I had not to laugh in her face. A week without Instagram? No, thank you. However, she explained to me that it was for the BBC School Report and the broadcasting company had approached us directly; thus, it was a big opportunity for our school. So, being the gracious (and modest) young lady that I am, I accepted the offer. I mean, how bad could it be anyway?

It turns out, not that bad. I can't lie, the first day was tough - I posted my final Snapchat story for a week about my friend and the seven pints of milk he'd just bought (don't ask, I don't know why either) because I felt it was important for me to go out on a high, then I deleted the Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Flickr and Pinterest apps off of my phone. We were all given badges declaring: "I am part of the pledge," which we could give in at any point during the week, should we feel that living a week *sans* social media was too much of a struggle. But I wasn't planning on throwing mine in the box any time soon. Winners never quit.

That lunch time, the absence was significant. Every day, the girls and I would sit together and read the Cosmo Snapchat Discover, but instead we had to actually sit and *talk* to each other. Turns out, they're actually nice people. (Jks, I knew that already.) (But they're not as nice as Cosmo.)



After school on the first day was hard too. In fact, we were a mere 4 hours and 45 minutes into the pledge when my dear friend Katy said, "You know, I'm really

not liking this pledge thing." Clearly, things were looking exceptionally positive from the offset.

It did pick up, though. Luckily, I had 100 desserts to bake for a Church fundraiser so it's not like I was twiddling my thumbs all day Saturday, but regardless I found that after a day or two I'd grown accustomed to not trawling through Instagram purely out of boredom. I got out of the habit of looking for the app only to find it wasn't there, and the shock of checking my phone to find no notifications wore off pretty quickly. (Yes, I get no notifications other than social media. Yes, I know how sad that sounds. I do have friends, I promise.)



Did it revolutionise my life to spend a week without social media? I can't say it did. Granted, I was marginally more productive than usual and I did actually give my bedroom a good clean which, trust me, is no mean feat. But for an expert procrastinator like myself, where there's a will there's a way. I did, on more than one occasion, find myself taking a shower because I was that desperate to put off work. One thing I did notice was an improvement in my punctuality- only by five or ten minutes, but that's enough time to eat breakfast, and see my friends for a few precious minutes. It wasn't a lot, but it was nice not to scoff a banana on the way to school and turn up to lesson, slightly sweaty with seconds to spare. I got a bit more reading done too, which did please me because I'm a real book lover and I'm forever kicking myself for not reading enough during the week. It was just a chapter or two most nights, but it's far better than the embarrassing lack of page turning I was doing before.



For me, the biggest loss was my Twitter account. As an over-eager feminist and a passionate advocate for social equality, I take to Twitter on a daily basis - and, on occasion, Instagram - in an attempt to educate my poor followers on the issues of inequality within our society and why it is so important to speak up on these matters. Having this taken away from me was incredibly frustrating because there is no shortage of hot topics to preach on. Rest assured I'll find something to rant about.

What I found was this - the use of technology and social media isn't a bad thing. A life without it is no more fulfilling than a life with it. It is, however, an incredibly good resource for learning things you're not taught in school - about the way our society functions - and a brilliant way of both making and sustaining relationships with people whom you would never meet without your trusty technology.

And don't even think about trying the: "In my day, I went outside to talk to my friends," argument with me. I have a friend in the Philippines. Am I supposed to just hop on a plane to have a quick chat about how she's doing? The world is *changing*. Great, in your day you nipped to your pal's place for a coffee and a catch up, or chatted for hours on the landline in your hallways, but in your day, most people's lives were almost exclusively contained in one town. Only ever meeting up face-to-face was a feasible option in the past, but that's not the reality of the world we live in any more. That in itself is the purpose of technology; we have to keep up with the progression of society. People are travelling, living in exotic locations, experiencing the world in ways they

never have done and we have to cater for this; travelling and learning more about the diversity of this planet is one of the most valuable things in life and to hinder that due to an unwillingness to accept change would be a real shame.

I'm a firm believer in developing this world to make ourselves the best, most educated, most tolerant and, most importantly, the friendliest people we can possibly be. Don't get me wrong - I know that technology has its downfalls. I've seen cyber-bullying and I've seen people underachieving in school due to misaligned priorities, but that's not everyone; it's a confused minority.

When it's used in the right way, I feel that technology, social media and all things related are priceless aids to the development of our society, and the loss of them would prove more detrimental than enlightening.

So no, I won't be giving up social media and technology forever. I'm sorry, but it's just not an option. You can take the girl out of Instagram, but you can't take Instagram out of the girl.



Photos by Matty Davies



# Is Social Media Controlling Our World?

By James Burnett

In today's technology-dependent society, it's become questionable whether giving up social media is even conceivable. Despite this, a large group of high school and Sixth Form students from Tarporley High School, myself included, decided to attempt to give up social media entirely for a week.

Nowadays it doesn't matter whether you're 16 or 60, the internet— and ultimately social media— are probably influencing your life in some way, no matter your technological literacy. But why does it impact our lives so much? The fact of the matter is it's everywhere - it's on our TV screens, our phones, our tablets, our PC's and who knows, it may even be on our microwaves in the future. The point being that social media is now inescapable, arguably even more so for young people as the cage of social media entraps more and more teenagers every day. For them, social media can be a form of restraint - I'm not just talking about cyber-bullying, nor am I trying to slate social media as a concept, I'm merely trying to portray the realities of its controlling nature. Being a teenager myself, checking my social media before, during and after school has become totally habitual; it's mainly the fear of missing out that drives most people to impulsively check their social media accounts. However, it is also down to the websites and apps themselves which keep us hooked, as new features, online fads and other benign content keeps us addicted and permanently in the clutches of these supposed "online communities".

***"Nowadays it doesn't matter whether you're 16 or 60, the internet— and ultimately social media— are probably influencing your life in some way"***

The main issue I have with social media is that we rely too heavily on it - of course social media is a great platform for celebrities, organisations, companies and normal people to connect, but as a society we are beginning to disassociate ourselves with the real world in order to reside in an online one. Even the Queen and the Pope have Twitter! So how much social media is too much and are we truly addicted? According to studies, 72% of online adults are using social media for an average of 23 hours per week, but is the vast use of social me-

dia an actual threat to young people? It was stated that for 50% of users, social media was having a negative impact on their lives as constant comparisons with peers and other online personalities led to self-image and self-gratification issues.

I've proved to myself over the past week that I am profoundly reliant on social media, however it would be a stretch to call it an addiction, as the absence of social media in my life for the past few days has not left me craving Snapchat or Instagram, but social interaction itself.

Although I have mentioned the controlling nature of social media, this in no way means that I will be permanently staying away - the fact is that it is already too prevalent in my life to simply ignore. I'm noticing this now more than ever during my Digital Detox. I found myself constantly on edge as if I had no real way of relaxation. It was as if I was totally disconnected to the world around me. With a grand total of 124 notifications in just 4 days, it became unbearable thinking about the online world continuing without me, even if 50% of the alerts were from immature friends reminding me of their social freedom.



Photo by Matty Davies

All in all, the entire 'Digital Detox' process was more painful than relieving; I expected to be relaxed and at peace, not caring about the state of the online world. But how could that ever come to be in today's society, where the gaps between the real world and the online world are so blurred that you begin to question if you could truly ever live unscathed by social media's dark clutches.

# A Diary of Learning to Love Lent

By Sophie Clayton

Let's talk about something called Lent.

Google says, "Lent (in the Christian Church) is the period preceding Easter, which is devoted to abstinence and penitence in commemoration of Christ's fasting in the wilderness." It sounds like a completely valid ritual to partake in for those who have not tossed religion into the basket of things they will strive to comprehend A.N. (After Netflix).

However, every year I am astounded by the number of people who, as my father likes to say, "starve themselves for no bloody reason". For people with no actual commitment to Jesus it baffles me why so many engage in such an activity.

*"Not eating chocolate for this long has nearly killed me. I am legitimately a Terry's Chocolate Orange away from the Grim Reaper right now and I don't want to leave this earth without saying 'I love you' to cocoa one last time"*

So, as a Lent virgin I jumped on the bandwagon and ended up in March. And here we are, with you maybe wondering why it's appropriate to talk about Lent now Easter has passed. It is appropriate because I have been told it helps to communicate your psychological scarring to others in order for them to be your light in dark times (or whatever). Personally, I just want you to feel my pain.

Not eating chocolate for this long has nearly killed me. I am legitimately a Terry's Chocolate Orange away from the Grim Reaper right now and I don't want to leave this earth without saying 'I love you' to cocoa one last time. And by that I mean eating it... nonstop... for at least 24hrs. It has honestly been akin to some obscure form of medieval torture, disguised as a 'personal challenge'. It's true, giving up a favourite food/hobby is a challenge but not in the way that Jenga or watching a whole season of Gossip Girl in two days is. Both of these

could be described as enjoyable and perhaps mildly difficult in order for them to merit being named a contest rather than a perfect weekend for losers like myself. Whereas, restricting yourself from a simple sugar during A levels is not at all amusing. Actually, it's pretty terrible and more than just a simple commitment. After evaluating your cocoa deprivation-induced suffering and scoring it a whopping 10 out of 10, it kind of blasts you with the realisation that you actually are failing to function as an adequate human. This is, admittedly, quite embarrassing.



Photo by Lucy O'Neill

And it's not even singularly an emotional strain; there is the 'internal moral struggle' (similar to our good friend, the existential crisis). In fact, at times I felt like I experienced the utterly ridiculous Angel and Devil shoulder scenario, in which the devil would scream, "TAKE THAT YEAR 7's DAIRY MILK BAR OR SO HELP ME" and the Angel would sigh "Satan makes a fair point".

However, this is by no means a push for unhealthy eating; instead it rather highlights the sheer will-power of students who truly can push through to Easter— fingers crossed. Overall, I can safely say that Lent has made this term a lot harder than it had to be. But... whilst I hate to be clichéd and positive at the same time, perhaps this little taste of Hell has been good for me. I feel a lot of people will agree when I say: when life gives you a pile of school work, any little achievement makes you feel like a Star(bar). So for us, Sixth Formers on Lent, resisting a bag of Mini Eggs (when they are just £1 at the Spar) adds a slither of optimism into the last few weeks of term. Just think, that sense of achievement might be enough of a reason to do Lent again next year - who knows?

No, just kidding. I'm not doing it next year. I need Cadburys.

# 8 Unmistakable House Party Individuals

By Sam Roberts



Aside from studies and laborious nights of homework, students are in dire need of release. Many find this release within annual games of common room poker, communal curries and pub crawls. However, for some students, this just isn't enough. Their options for entertainment can be quite limited, so when the chance to attend an old-school house party does arise they jump at it, dropping their poker chips and poppadums in exchange for bottles of Budweiser and the opposite sex. Without a doubt, you encounter some strange characters at such parties. The following list has been comprised from experience and, believe me, you're BOUND to find a strain of one of them at your next jaunt.

**The Host** – The Host is a pivotal figure within the house party scene. It may seem obvious, but the whole foundation of the party is built on this one person. Throughout the night they are proclaimed a success. The Host is a brave person; they risk it all to provide a night of epic events. It can be a make-or-break for them in terms of social status – hosting the term's best house party will accelerate you to the top of the hierarchy of popularity.

**The Mess** – First thing's first, your party wasn't good enough if you fail to see multiple Messes at any one point. They are often the ones who seldom touch alcohol, yet when they do, melt into a vomiting, wobbling abyss. Said Messes are guilty for underestimating the power of beer; they are usually the ones who make the fatal error of mixing drinks. They end up booking themselves a one-way ticket to a brutal hangover the following morning.

**The Eater** – Food is never seen at a house party, yet somehow this one person will always be found stumbling around, stuffing their face with whatever they've laid their hands on. The cause for them eating is that they're attempting to avoid their inevitable fate: becoming The

Mess. If you see The Eater throughout the night, make sure you dodge them – or be ready to catch their sick.

**The Try-Hard** – A favourite of mine; they stick out like a sore thumb. Locate the Try-Hard by searching for a group of one sex – within this group you'll find one lone ranger from the opposite sex. This is the Try-Hard. They carry extra drinks with them to use as a bargaining tool when trying to hook up with their victim. Without being sexist, just based on past experience, this person is often a male and often a d\*\*\* head. Their sole aim for the night is to 'pull' and they won't stop at anything until they have... even preying on The Mess to achieve their goal.

**The Crier** – Tears are a certainty at a house party. All that unfulfilled lust and rejection must go somewhere... usually on the shoulder of their best friend in the form of tears. The Crier tends to appear towards the end of the night, after the depressant from the alcohol has taken effect. They become enraptured with self-pity and begin to question their existence, even entertaining doubts about their lack of top-of-the-pyramid genes. However, do not be deceived – once you begin to comfort them they will seize the opportunity and you will be laboured with them for the rest of the night. My advice? Stay well away from The Crier, or be ready to listen to droves of monotonous, disturbing and quite frankly annoying drunken sadness.

**The Minesweeper** – This character is very hard to detect. They've perfected the art of staying under the radar; they drift from group to group, undetected. Most Minesweepers are seasoned professionals and know what they're doing. Oh, and did I mention they're cheapskates too? The Minesweepers are the ones who arrive empty handed and stone-cold sober, yet leave in a state of intoxication never seen before. After conducting reconnaissance of the area, they set to work sweeping the counters of unattended cans and bottles of alcohol to claim as their own. A veteran Minesweeper can have the best night of their lives, thankfully often paying for the taxi home.

**The Awkward Couple** – Every party has an Awkward Couple. They cling to each other like a bad smell to a landfill site; no matter where they go, they're always together. Inseparable, to say the least. They both hover around the room, standing there in fear of talking to somebody other than their partner. The whole night they question why they even decided to attend; instead they



envisage a superior alternative, such as tucking up under a duvet together and putting on a cheesy rom-com.

**The Uninvited** – Finally, there's The Uninvited. As well as themselves, with their arrival they bring an air of fear and tension. Sometimes the infiltrators mean no harm, and on rare occasions add to the atmosphere of the party. However, often they just want to be a nuisance, purposely causing havoc and bringing shame to them-

selves. The Uninvited are escape artists, too – they usually leave as quickly as they came – but the major fault of theirs is that they're notorious thieves as well; when they disappear from the party, so will some of your possessions. Be vigilant when they do appear.

Take heed, at your next party don't be The Mess, The Crier or The Minesweeper— you (and your liver) will thank me for it...

## Do You Speak *Prada*?

### Let me give you a lesson in

### FOCAB

By Annaliese Taylor

Confessions of a Shopaholic has taught many women, like myself, that a little splurge on designer brands now and again never hurt anyone, right? (If you haven't watched this ultimate chick flick, I HIGHLY recommend you do - it will become your holy grail, trust me, girls). If you feel good, you look good and Prada definitely does this for me.

I've often wondered how to speak 'Prada'. This article will give you a special insight into how designers interact and connect with willing, excitable fashionistas. Does this 'language' even exist? Well, let me tell you, fashion definitely has its own jargon.

Prada has its own identity - daring yet conservative looks, crazy and yet so normal or 'everyday.' Kind of like myself (Ha Ha). It's not only the luxury and elegance of their designs but the originality and quality of the fashion label that comes with them. To brush up on your knowledge of the evident language of 'Prada', I suggest you listen to the song 'Fashion' by Lady Gaga: "Step into the room like it's a catwalk" "Walk into the light" "I feel alive when I transform" "Donnez-moi Christian Louboutin". Consider this to be your life manual, your mantra, your bible. Miuccia Prada once said 'Fashion is an instant language, it's how you describe the piece that gives it life'. Oh the wise words of Miuccia... 'Iconic' 'Chic' 'Couture'... these are words which are linguistically delicious! However, there are certain words which should be banished from the fashion world. It's like one of those moments from Mean Girls where if you wear the wrong type of clothing on the wrong day, you can't sit with us or associate with us— only this time, it's the grammar and vocabulary which we use. For example, if someone used the word 'floaty' to describe a little silk number, I would cry with disappointment and slap them hard on the wrist. You see, it can be difficult to write



professionally about a garment because fashion is so linguistically challenging.

To guide you on how to evoke a garment's ethereal qualities in writing, here are a few words which need to be expelled from our FOCAB (fashion vocab):

**Funky** - Whoever created this depressing word needs to seriously stay in the 70's and have a reality check. Please.

**Nice** - Here is one for the boys. If your girlfriend/wife EVER asks for your opinion on how she looks and you reply with 'nice', boy, you'd better re-think that bland answer fast because she will NOT be happy.

**Simple** - Darling, nothing is simple. All clothing has its own characteristics. It's the woman who wears it that makes it stand out.

**Hot** - Are you really going to use slang to describe a flirtatious co-ord? No, I think not.

So now you have had a brief insight in the don'ts, here are some of the dos that are a must when writing a fashion piece:

**Epaulettes** - You're writing a piece on a Balmain blazer and the shoulder pads are out of this world. This French borrowing purr-fectly describes a decorative shoulder adornment.

**Herringbone** - Ever wondered what that V-shaped pattern was on beautiful tweed jackets? This is it - herringbone. Show your readers your textile-uquette!

**Iridescent** - Instead of using 'shiny' which is BANNED, use this word which has connotations of aquatic-mermaids— what a perfect image.

**Faux** - This is one the most important words in fashion history. You should never wear real fur - that is when the backlash begins. Always use the word faux when describing any timeless furry fashion piece.

When thinking about all of the above, it truly makes sense! Think about it - why drink standard wine when you can have the most luxurious bottle of champagne? Why settle for Primark's finest when you can dream about the newest season of the Ballenciaga runway collection? Learn to speak Prada effortlessly. Don't worry darling, you can thank me later...

— Annaliese XOXO Focab expert and user of  
Textile-uquette XOXO



## The DofE Dilemma

By Eilidh Bodfish

Summer approaches and homework begins to stack up. Exams loom ominously in the near future. You are dimly aware, but trying desperately not to think about it, that at some point you're going to have to decide what you actually want to *do* with your life. Distant family members constantly ask you: 'What do you mean, you haven't decided which universities you're going to apply to? You don't even know which *course* you want to do?' They stare at you with expressions of impending doom, shaking their heads at the 14 wasted years of state-funded education.

You see, it's not enough to pick a course because you like the subject or you think it sounds interesting. You need *evidence*. Evidence that this is what you've always wanted to do. Evidence that you have dreamed of being an engineer from the age of four, that at 10 you invented a new kind of bridge and that you spend all your free time devouring 800-page essays on the different applications of steel in construction. Worried? You should be. You've only got a few short months to become every university's dream candidate.

Not that the dream candidate is what you might expect. High grades are essential, but what about the rest? You need to be a *rounded* person, with interesting skills. So this is the part where you had better produce that under-18 world champion triathlon trophy, or you don't stand a chance. How many instruments do you have Grade 8 in? How many novels have you published? What have you got to show for all these years of free time? (How we are expected to have so much free time, while simultaneously doing 5 hours of revision a night, is beyond me.) Unfortunately, sleeping and Facebook don't qualify as valuable hobbies. Being able to re-enact every episode of *Friends* from memory doesn't quite cut it.

But hang on. Wait. Aren't we forgetting something? While all around us sleep-deprived teenagers are slowly drowning in a sea of panic and indecision, a small, select group of students remains smugly calm. They're sorted, you see, because they have the Holy Grail for university applications—and, let's be honest, life success in general—their Duke of Edinburgh's award.

Everyone knows that DofE is the best thing you can have on your CV. You will gain rare and valuable skills; nothing, we are told, will improve your life chances as much as this. But is it actually true? The process itself costs a whopping £430, and that's before the addi-

tional costs of a rucksack, boots, a coat, waterproof trousers, food... What does DofE actually prove about you, apart from that you're capable of walking (truly a remarkable achievement) and that your parents have some cash to spare? Compared to another candidate with better grades, do you really think that a prospective employer or university would look at you and think: 'This one can put up a tent and dig a toilet behind a bush. Those are *definitely* the skills we're looking for here.'

Don't forget – you can also read a map. This will possibly help you to get to your interview. Once you're in there though, you might find your interviewers unimpressed by your ability to give a six-figure grid reference. At least if you feel faint with stress you can put yourself into the recovery position.



Perhaps I'm being a little harsh. Gold DofE is a lot more than a stroll in the scenic countryside. We're talking four days of mountaineering (yes, real mountains – not the Sandstone Trail), 20 km per day, carrying a third of your body weight and navigating through endless hills, often without an actual path to follow. No iPhones allowed, so no social media – the only living contact you're likely to have is with sheep, something you'll be glad of on the third day without hairdryers or makeup. No Google maps to save you either; and since a large percentage of teenagers struggle to make toast without injuring someone, can you imagine cooking yourself dinner, outside, after a day hiking in the rain? The nearest Dominos is a long, long walk away.

So, someone who has done Gold DofE is determined and resilient; they can put up with pretty grim situations and keep going in the face of a challenge. They can also sterilise water and know basic First Aid, so would be a handy person to have around should you find yourself unexpectedly stranded on a desert island. Still, is it really worth the effort? Months of volunteering and sport, weeks of planning and training, four days of Bear Grylls-style abandonment in Wales – for a certificate? Ask most people who do it, though, and you'll find the certificate isn't much of a motivation. You might struggle to believe it, but actually, DofE is a surprising amount of fun.

# Don't Underestimate me.

By Emilie Reed

I'm not a mathematician but I do know this...

There are infinite numbers between one and zero. There is point one, point one two and an infinite collection of others. Similarly, there is an infinite collection of names women are addressed by – such as *darling*, *babe*, *chick* - then an infinite regression to *bitch*, *slag* and worse. The reoccurring question is: should we fight back? Last time I checked it is not the 1970s – why isn't there a comparably patronising or insulting list of terms for males? *Chief*, *bro* or *geezer* just don't equate.

According to linguist Julia Stanley, there are 220 terms for promiscuous females which are sexually insulting (*tart, bike...* I could go on...) however only 20 for males, which are often seen as less taboo and more light hearted, even honorific: *lad, player, stud*. This reflects the idea that it's okay for a male to go out and sleep with anyone he chooses, but if a female does the same she has immediately stepped over the line.

So, what about ‘ladies’ – a neutral term surely? Right? But we aren’t ladies. The term connotes conde-

scension, describing women who are put on the planet to be patronised, implying that a man must take care of us, insinuating we are incapable of doing things on our own. ‘Ladies’ shouldn’t dare to be seen with their fingernails chipped or swearing, we drink wine demurely, never beer. We sit upright at the dinner table with our hands on our lap and our hair neatly away from our eyes, keeping our knees together at all times. I’ve discovered there is no word in our language to define a woman that is non-judgmental; even Beyoncé tried to reclaim ‘Feminist’ as a positive expression and failed to succeed. We then have the problem that if we don’t share the same interests as our friends then we’re *basic bitches*. They’re normal; you’re weird. If you *canoodle* with more than one man in a week you’re a *slag* yet the guy you have kissed receives numerous high fives for ‘tapping the new girl’.

Why is it that there are such asymmetrical titles for men and women?

Our language seems biased and loaded with attitude. Of course there are male terms with sexual connotations, such as bachelor or silver fox, but all that really means is that you are a single, possibly frustrated, man with a great pad or an old guy who's still breathtakingly attractive. We then have the lighthearted, tedious and shallow nick names like *d\*\*k*, *d\*\*\*heads* and *pr\*\*k*, of course all relating to the male genital area, yet the 'C word' is widely considered the most taboo and offensive terms in our language.

Should we complain about the trashy address term we are given? Some say they make us bold, distinctive. *Ladette. Alphafemale. Amazon.* They are names celebrating the independence of women and we live in an era where there have never been more ways to express how unique we are. Sadly, along with these empowered terms we also have *airhead, bimbo, ditzy, blonde*— we have *spinster, hag, crone* and *biddy*. Women *witter* or *chatter* or *bitch* and *nag*. We're *mingers* or *heffers* or *lollipop-heads*. Seems we can't win.

However, we still need a non-judgmental female address term. What about *babe* - too youthful? *Bae*? I don't think so. *Guy*? Too masculine.

We all have a bit of courageousness, an unapologetic spirit and fearlessness in us - right? We just need the courage to let it out...

Just call me *feisty* in future.







# It's Time to Talk about Mental Health

By Faye Maloney

It has become a widely known fact that in today's society, 1 in 4 people suffer from a mental health problem every year. Furthermore, 1 in 10 young people will experience a mental health problem, most likely during their time at school. Yet a stigma still surrounds this topic, and it is almost untouched upon in schools across the country. For the well-being of students everywhere, this needs to change.

Teenagers today face many more new pressures and difficulties compared to a few years ago, particularly in the Sixth Form environment. As well as the stress of A Levels, including coursework and revision, many other struggles commonly faced by teenagers can lead to serious mental health issues. For example, the presence of Instagram and other social media websites has been found to contribute to negative body image adopted particularly by young girls. Although having low self-esteem isn't a diagnosable illness, in some extreme cases it can lead to body dysmorphic disorder, or even an eating disorder.

It is common for young people to experience spells of sadness and mood swings during puberty; but when does feeling down become something more serious, such as depression? Symptoms such as a decrease in enjoyment and time spent with friends and family, feelings of hopelessness, sadness and anxiety, as well as a strong resistance to attending school, can ring alarm bells for many health care professionals. Unfortunately, due to a lack of awareness, many teenagers may dismiss their own problems as being irrational and stupid - even if they are genuinely suffering from an illness. This is yet another reason as to why we need more recognition and understanding of mental illness in schools - to let other children know that they are not alone and allow them to seek help from professionals.

Throughout our education we are taught how to look after our health - at Tarporley we have demonstrations in first aid and talks on drug abuse. Mental illnesses may not be physical conditions, but their effects can be devastating on students and their families. Around 4,400 people end their own lives in England each year— that's one death every two hours— and at least 10 times that number attempt suicide. Could these numbers be lessened with improved awareness of mental health issues?

Here at Tarporley, we have started to make a change. Tarporley Sixth Form student and Cheshire West Youth Parliament candidate Sarah Stearne has addressed this issue in her campaign. She says: "I think it's essential that we educate young people on mental health considering it's such a widespread issue that affects so many people, and it's only increasing. This is why I'm determined to encourage improvements to the local mental health services during my term as a member of Youth Parliament— and raising awareness is essential for this."



Photo by Matty Davies

But campaigning in schools isn't enough. Young people need more available facilities in their local area, to support them through any potential trouble. A specialised mental health centre, counsellors within schools or even just a hotline with a reassuring voice on the other end, could improve teenager's lives vastly.

But unfortunately, things may not be improving fast enough. Earlier this year it was revealed that mental health trusts in England have had £600 million slashed from their budgets in the last five years. A disappointing fact— yet one that should not cause us to give up the fight for improved mental health awareness.

In time we can change this stigma, and help improve the lives of those suffering with mental illnesses. Through campaigns and voicing the opinions of young people, we can help improve facilities and services in our country, and hopefully, save lives. Perhaps in the future, an anxiety disorder will be treated as non-judgementally as a broken leg, and we can end the mental illness stigma once and for all.



# The Inadequacy of Sex Ed

By Olivia Gregory

SEX. The three letter word that many students recoil in horror at the sound of. Who can forget the early days at school when one of the biology teachers finally introduced the class to a more detailed version of sex education? I certainly can't. The giggling— sometimes even screaming – as the biology teachers frantically try to calm the students like they're animals at Chester Zoo. But throughout all the years of sex education and through all the commotion of those who thought it would be funny to make balloons out of condoms, I do think that there are some flaws within the education system and for some reason, I thought I'd share them with the whole Sixth Form...

Firstly, sex isn't all about transferring STD's to one another (hopefully). It should be about (urgh this is going to sound really cheesy, but here goes), the expression of love for another person!

Regardless, I believe that sex education and the teaching of our anatomies should be more than a scientific entity. Instead we should also be educated on the relationship side of sex, and not just about Gonorrhoea or Herpes. I believe that it is imperative that young people are educated on the mutual respect that one must have for their partner and the general understanding of sex.

***"It is time to see a change in our educational approach to teaching students about sex for all different sexualities"***

Similarly, the lack of education regarding homosexual sex is evident. We live in a society where all people are accepted for who they are. However, our rapid development of liberal ideology isn't reflected in our education system, where unfortunately our ignorance and immaturity can lead to the decline of open, un-judged and mature conversations about sex. It is time to see a change in our educational approach to teaching students about sex for all different sexualities, and although it may be funny and juvenile at first, we should start to take a more conscientious approach to learning about something that actually matters. Because funnily enough, sex education is more beneficial than learning certain things like Pythagoras' Theorem. For some reason I can STILL remember that equation, but couldn't remember the relevant material I needed for my Russian History exam. Thanks, Maths...

Having your regular teacher educate you about a very intimate and personal subject can lead to awkward conversations, but sex education has the variation of being taught by teachers and outside visitors, who can be just as bad. How can anybody forget the weird guy who stood at the front of the hall and injected the fear of all mighty God into horror-stricken students as he told us about everything bad that could possibly EVER happen to you after having sex? And, my fellow year group, lest we forget that one student who graciously fell like a sack of spuds after we were told that a symptom of a specific STD was that urinating felt like being slashed with 100 razor blades on your penis! Ah, what a thought provoking image. To be honest, I'm not surprised that someone fainted.

Instead, I believe (on a serious note) that certain things do need to change, whether that be educating people from an earlier age to allow them the ability to see that sex isn't all about negativity, or by trying to remove the idea that sex and our bodies are more than things that are simply taught in a science lab. As students, it is easy to forget the awkwardness for the teachers who are told to teach sex education to a class of raving buffoons who will in no way take the lesson seriously. But to the teachers, it is also important for you to not be embarrassed when talking about sex education. Instead, advocate confidence within the students to ask questions, regardless of how ridiculous they sound and show that sex education doesn't have to be a daunting task. Look at it as you helping to alleviate the stigma that resides within some students about sex and that it really isn't all doom and gloom.

So to my fellow Sixth Formers and anybody else who may so happen to stumble across a copy of this, please don't act coy about a universal act which occurs every day, because there really isn't anything to be embarrassed about. But, if the conversation ever does arrive, or you want to ask a question or engage in conversation, just instigate the Band Camp Rule: What is said in these four walls... STAYS in these four walls! We should all learn to respect each other's thoughts and beliefs and we shouldn't go running out to the bathrooms to exchange 'hot gossip' over what Sarah said in the classroom about the wild experience she had with Mark, the holiday rep she met at Rosie's on Friday. However, remember to also not go bragging on about it either, because you will end up smashing champagne on the bough of a boat that has absolutely no plan, in any universe, of returning.

# Why Writing an Article for a Sixth Form Magazine is so Daunting:

By Rhiannon Price



So I'm sat in front of my laptop on a sleepy Spring (ish) Sunday morning, straining myself trying to come up with an intellectual, engaging and entertaining article for this magazine.

Blank.

I have stared at the screen for the past hour and a half on a Sunday with no witty, engaging or intellectual thoughts. There could be an argument that all the A Level analysis in my subjects has sucked the creative life out of me and I am merely a shrivelled up essay machine meaninglessly throwing assessments left, right and centre, praying for July. However, it could be down to the fact that it is so daunting trying to engage an audience

that isn't an A Level examiner. It's even worse when it's your peers. You drag yourself through Sixth Form, looking for some glimmer of inspiration, but all



that's presented to you are people banging their heads against A2 Psychology textbooks and friends becoming enemies whilst fighting over the last hash brown.

I even trawled through Twitter, trying to find some inspiration, but all that I found were pictures of Kim Kardashian naked, Kim Kardashian empowering women who get naked, and Kim Kardashian's sister (the one with the name beginning with K, I can't remember them all).

So here I am, still staring at the screen. Ranting about how I lack any form of inspiration to write something worthwhile for an award-winning Sixth Form magazine. Coffee? Cold. Weetabix? Soggy. Coursework deadlines? Forgotten.

With the new magazine team taking over as the Year 13s retire to their revision caves of despair, here is my personal advice: yes, it may be daunting writing an article for the Sixth Form, and you'll constantly be wondering what people really think, but the reward of people picking up the magazine and enjoying your articles makes all the daunting thoughts and stress vanish.

## Saying Goodbye.

We've had our ups and downs but it's finally time to let go and we couldn't be prouder.

It's time. It's time to accept the fact that we are going to be saying goodbye. Our baby is all grown-up now. She won't need us anymore; it's time she experiences the world on her own. She's becoming an adult and she needs to learn to spread her wings and become independent.

We've had our ups and downs; we still remember her first word, "hello" and how long it took to get her to say anything at all. She was four months old, but we finally got there.

We remember times when we thought it would be easier to just give up, but then she won her first award and we stood like the two proud parents we are, tears in our eyes and cameras filming every second of it. She was so young, just 10 months old, and she won against others who were over five years of age.

We've had our ups and downs; she hated having her photo taken, it took ages of sneaky pictures before perfecting the perfect frame with the perfect smile.

By Maddie Berry and Annabelle Moss



She still has that new born baby smell; clean and fresh; it's almost impossible to believe that it's time for her to finally leave the nest. We know she'll be okay; she has loads of good people looking after her and we'll still pop in from time to time to see how she's doing. We're not abandoning her completely. Her new family will take care of her.

We've had our ups and downs, but in the end, we're proud to call her our baby, and we couldn't be happier with her achievements.

Goodbye, Term.

