

## Senior Debating

*H Cartmill and V Harrison*

**“The power of real debate is in the language and intellectual honesty of the debaters, alongside the engagement of the spectators.”**

**Ruzwana Bashir**

Why do misogynist crimes continue to rise in the C21st? How should C21st protests be policed? Should school uniform be abolished? The worrying rise in racism and xenophobic attitudes in today's society?

These are just some of the questions debated at break in the Drama Studio this year. As always in September, the newly elected committee put together an ambitious programme striking a balance between pre-planned and spontaneous debates in response to regional, national and world events. Other issues and questions which were keenly debated include:

- Why are young people so disengaged from politics?
- The return of the N Ireland Stormont Assembly: does it matter to you?
- Convicted criminals should be forced to attend their sentencing and to listen to victim impact statements.
- The conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza.
- The funding crisis in education and how it will affect you.
- Film classification ratings: can what is seen in films damage young minds?

Our speakers were from across Years 11 to 14 and their speaking styles ranged from the carefully prepared to the completely spontaneous. What each had in common was genuine conviction and a strong interest in contemporary affairs. No apathy towards politics, ethics, or current affairs in Senior Debating Club!

Congratulations to those who took part in two Public Speaking Competitions. Sienna Scullion, Hannah Kerr and Jorja McCabe took part in the Soroptimist Competition while Aaron Kenna took part in the Ulster Women's Unionist Council Edgar Graham Memorial Public Speaking Competition held annually in the Senate Chamber at Parliament Buildings Stormont. Well done to Olivia De La Torre who took part in both competitions



and was placed third in each, fighting off stiff competition from across N Ireland to gain a prize in the Stormont competition.

Looking ahead to next year, we extend a

warm welcome to all in Years 11-14. Please look out for the notices of the election of a new committee and the timetable of meetings in early September.

