

Extra-Curricular

Senior Scripture Union

Joshua Thompson



Another year at Banbridge Academy's Scripture Union has passed and what a year it has been! This year has been full of so many fun and amazing moments, making it difficult to pick out a highlight.

Our theme this year in SU was 'Unshakable', and how we as Christians can stand strong in our faith. Senior SU meets every Tuesday at breaktime, during which we have guest speakers who bring a short message, as well as a time of praise and fellowship with the others in school. To explore this year's theme, in our main meetings, we have looked at the armour of God (which is found in the book of Ephesians) as well as looking at relatable characters in the Bible who (despite flaws) were used by God to do great things.

As well as our main meetings on Tuesday break times, we have a number of other meetings throughout the week including 'Spark', which was held in the pupil hub from Monday to Thursday. This is where we start the day off with a short devotional as well as a time of prayer together. On Fridays Mr Beacom's room plays host to 'Tea and Toast' where everyone is welcome to start the day off with breakfast, tea and a chat with friends before school begins. 'Small groups' are also held for each year group during the week and this is a time when people from the same year group can come together, share thoughts and have Bible-based discussions.

To kick the year off, our SU BBQ brought many members together from both JSU and SSU for games, activities and some delicious

food. One highlight at the start of the year was our pizza and quiz night during outreach week at the beginning of October. Our competitiveness ran wild as only one group could be crowned victors. The best part though was that Aaron Millen's 18th birthday was on this night too, and needless to say the celebrations were not dulled down with a massive cake being presented to the birthday boy who did not shy away with a giant pink badge pinned to his top.

By far, my favourite part of this year was the SU weekend from the 10th to the 12th of November. We all set off to the Seaview Centre in Kilkeel for one of the best weekends of my life. Phil Annet, our guest speaker, delivered some outstanding messages on our theme of 'Unshakable' from the Bible books of Daniel, Matthew and Jude, as well as his very heartfelt testimony on Saturday night, alongside other members of SU. We all enjoyed the seminars that were presented to us, which were an encouragement and blessing to us all. The funniest part of the weekend had to be seeing the entire committee running through Kilkeel dressed up in a variety of costumes during our hunt-the-leader activity. My favourite was Beth Cordner dressed up as a giant whoopee cushion. It was an amazing weekend filled with so much fun and to the teachers' dismay, very little sleep (sorry Mr Beacom!)

The SU formal in March brought us all together for a brilliant night of great memories. We knew the party started as

soon as we saw Mr McGuinness step out of his car in a fabulous kilt! What an incredible night! SU this year has been full of so many amazing memories and so much joy that I can't possibly include everything. However, while this is great, it isn't entirely what SU is about. It was such a joy to see God working throughout this year in everything we did.



The reason for SU is because as Christians we love our Lord and we want to spend time with him and other Christians regularly, as well as spread the good news of the Gospel throughout our school. SU has been such an encouragement to me and everyone else this year and we have seen SU thrive through His help. As I move on to the next chapter of my life, my hope is that we will stand firm in our faith and be 'unshakable'. We also hope that the amazing news of Christ is spread around our whole school so pupils have the knowledge that as they put their trust in Him, they will know peace and the hope of Heaven as they live for Him.

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Junior Scripture Union

Matthew Chapter 18 vs 20: Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.

Georgina Harkness, Lena Graham and Rachel Graham (11C)

Junior Scripture Union (JSU) meets every Thursday breaktime in the lecture theater or drama studio and is taken by Christian members of staff. JSU always starts off with a fun game, followed by learning about the bible and ending with a prayer. We also occasionally have visiting speakers, who deliver interesting talks about the bible and their experiences.



It's very encouraging to see how dedicated our teachers are, giving up their Thursday breaktimes to teach us and help us grow in our faith. Miss McConkey, Mr Erskine, Miss Forsythe, Mrs Duke, Mr Irwin, Mrs Kernaghan and Mrs Dreading take turns to lead with a talk and provide encouragement for reading our bibles. They also play some games with us, encouraging us to make Christian friends so we can learn from them as well as our teachers.



In Junior SU there are a lot of fun activities where you can build strong friendships with others who share your faith, including trips to Let's Go Hydro, bible study, prayer meetings



in F66 and, of course, the JSU weekend!

Do you enjoy adventure and learning more about God? Well, the JSU Weekend has all of that! We spent a weekend at the Ganaway Activity Centre in Millisle. When we arrived we ate lunch and the activities began! There was caving, laser tag, rock wall climbing and in the evening we enjoyed some games and

a few words from our lovely speaker-David McConkey! On our second day we continued with more activities and finished with the best bit, the walk down to the beach, skimming stones, smelling the salty air and taking the JSU weekend group photo.

We loved our time in JSU and we hope you do too!