

The Blue Coat School

Parent Newsletter

Wednesday 22nd December 2021



Headteacher Update

Welcome to our half-termly Christmas Newsletter.

We have come to the end of a very productive and successful term. You will see from the items in this newsletter that staff and students have been engaged in a wide range of activities and challenges both within and outside the classroom.

I am intensely proud of the way we have met a number of challenges

through this term and how staff and students have shown resilience and character through them.

I would like to say a particular thank you to you our parents for the tremendous support you have given the school in very many ways. It has made a significant difference knowing we have your support.



We will be launching our refreshed mission, vision and values piece in mid January. The work is now complete and we are just awaiting new visuals both within and outside the school to be in place.

We are all aware that the national picture regarding the covid restrictions may change over the Christmas holidays.

We will of course keep you updated on any relevant changes we may need to put in place in school as a consequence.

It just leaves me to send you all my very best wishes for a happy, restful and joyful Christmas break.

Best wishes
Scilla Yates

Key Stage Leader Updates

Key Stage 3

KS3 students were invited to take part in a competition to design the front cover of next term's form booklet. There were some excellent entries and all participants were awarded achievement points for their participation. The winner of the competition is **Gideon in 8B** whose design will be on all the KS3 form booklets next spring. Well done Gideon!



Design by Gideon

Key Stage 4

KS4 have had a fantastic half term. We have seen huge participation rates in extracurricular activities. KS4 have taken part in many sporting events with great success and have made the most of opportunities in school ranging from board game club to debating society.

Y11 should be commended for their efforts with the running and collection of items for the food bank. They will have made a positive impact to many people's lives. We hope they continue their acts of charitable work both inside and outside of school.

During the term Y9 were fortunate to take part in an EMPOWER carousel that was run by Liverpool CAMHS, here students focussed on wellbeing and mental health topics and explored ways in which they can be supported. It was a fantastic day, and it was great to see year 9 get involved.

Throughout the term KS4 have had numerous assemblies. We have focused on remembrance, safeguarding, equality and diversity, modern-day slavery and prejudice. We have finished the term with a superb festive assembly where the concert band were able to showcase their talent.

KS4 have worked hard throughout the winter months and should look forward to a well-deserved Christmas break. We look forward to welcoming them back in January and wish Y11 the best of luck in their mocks.

Merry Christmas and all the best for 2022!

Key Stage 5

In January, we have scheduled an event day for KS4 & KS5. The company running the event is The Prime Agency, they have been in school before and the students really enjoyed the interactive performance. The focus of the one-hour performance is Mental health, Body Image/LGBTQ+ , it also includes a Q&A session at the end.

We are excited to have planned our Sixth form Prom in June, please look out for details of this via parent mail. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to celebrate their time at Bluecoat.

Subject Area Updates

Art

This term students within the Art department have enjoyed a variety of opportunities. Several students submitted excellent pieces for the Christmas Card competition whilst 2 of our Year 13 students have been running a well-attended lunchtime Art club for the year 7 & 8s.

Art has been very busy at lunchtimes with students completing work or simply working for fun. A big thanks to Mr Murphy and the 6th form prefects for running this each and every day! We have also introduced an after school 'digital Art club', running every Wednesday in W09. This allows students to work on their digital Art under supervision, making use of the school computers and the Adobe Creative suite. Attendance is open to all. Next term this will run from 3pm - 4pm.

Outside of school, Old Blues Patrick and Edward Taft invited current Year 13 student Irma in to view their Architecture practice in Liverpool City Centre. Irma said it was a great opportunity and fantastic to see what Universities and employers require from students, whilst Patrick finally 'returned' a book borrowed from the department some 8 years ago!

Some great work has again been produced this term, please follow the department's Twitter and Instagram pages for the latest pieces.

Biology

Year 8 Biology students took part in our annual Flanimals competition, where students were given the opportunity to design their own organism with specific adaptations to the environment. Entries were to an excellent standard and showed a great range of scientific understanding and artistic ability. Winners have been announced in lessons, but a specific well done to 8B for producing the overall winning piece. Thank you to all students for taking part.

Business Studies

Year 9s enter the Dragons' Den

The entrepreneurial skills of Year 9 Business students are being put to the test as they battled in Blue Coat's own version of Dragons' Den to persuade classmates and judges of the success of their new ideas.

The exercise is based on the well-known TV program where embryonic entrepreneurs pitch their ideas to a panel of business experts in the hope of getting investment.

There are five groups of five Business students from different classes, and the winning group will have the chance to bring their idea to life and open a Winter-Christmas Stall in the Chapel on Friday, 17 December, for Year 9s and staff. The students have considered all the different components of a Business Plan for their own new business ideas, such as the product itself, promotion, the target market, demographic factors, suppliers' costs, pricing, profitability, and expected sales.

Some inventive product names and slogans have been chosen by groups, like 'Tinsel Treats – Somethin' Sweet'; 'Snowy Shoutout – Santa's gone rogue (there's snow going back)'. One group per class will be chosen and from them finally a single winner announced.

Ms Mahmood, Business teacher, said: "The idea is to bring Business to life for the students, applying what they have learnt in lessons to make it so much more enjoyable for them.

"The students have been working on this all term and it also covers learning how to work together in teams and developing a structure to bring their idea to a successful conclusion. It's also about managing their enthusiasm and working under pressure.

"The judges will be looking for originality and different types of ideas, how they've presented their pitch, the use of PowerPoint and props, and how they've used their personalities to own the product."

Chemistry

It has been another very busy term in the Chemistry department. Students have been working hard across the year groups. A number of Year 13 students have been attending after school sessions with Mr Cowan each Thursday in preparation for the Chemistry Olympiad. These sessions are designed to challenge our students at the highest level and introduce them to concepts beyond the A Level syllabus.

Key stage 3 Chemistry club has been a success this half term with around 20 students from Y7 and 8 attending each week supervised by Mr Lewis, Miss Sedgwick and the Chemistry prefects. It runs every Tuesday lunchtime in N12 and this term, the students have enjoyed investigating density, making a lava lamp, colour changing electrochemical writing, making chromatography trolls and flame colours and the chemistry of firework colours. The activities are designed to demonstrate how chemistry is used in society and to enrich the curriculum topics we cover.



English



Great Reads

Some fab books to recommend to teens for Christmas reading and into 2022. These are the choices of our KS3 and 4 students.

The Max Helsing series, by Curtis Jobling is suitable for ages 10+ and for those who like to combine their horror with humour. Adrian Mole by Sue Townsend keeps entertaining new teens with a wistful comedy that never seems to date. Another title for pre-teens is Kaspar by Michael Morpurgo in which hotel bell-boy, Johnny and his cat, Kaspar embark on a journey around the world. Finally, in Oranges in No Man's Land by Elizabeth Laird, 10-year-old Ayesha must embark on a perilous journey across the war-torn city of Beirut to find a doctor for her sick grandmother.

Young adults will like Stolen by Lucy Christopher. Gemma, a 17-year-old girl is drugged and taken from an airport to an isolated existence in Australia. Soon, she realises that her captor has been planning her abduction for her whole life. Girl in Pieces by Kathleen Glasgow deals sensitively with the topic of self-harm. For fans of crime writing, A Good Girl's Guide to Murder introduces us to 17-year-old student, Pippa who makes it her mission to re-open a closed case: the murder of schoolgirl, Andie Bell. For fantasy fans, Burn by Patrick Ness introduces us to a rare, fire-breathing dragon that arrives on a mid-west farm in the 1950s, deep in the Cold War. An F.B.I. chase ensues in this allegorical novel for teens. A Monster Calls by the same author is also highly recommended.

Finally, The Silent Patient is a psychological thriller by Alex Michaelides, recommended by a KS4 student, and suitable for older teens and adults. Theo Faber is a young psychotherapist on a mission to restore the speech of his patient, a woman accused of the murder of her husband but who has not spoken since his killing. A favourite of the Richard and Judy book club. Enjoy!

Geography

The all new KS3 Geography Society has been launched in December with its aim to inspire and support the next generation of Blue Coat geographers. The society will be run by year 12 geography students who are keen to pass on their passion for the subject.

The society will take place on a Monday lunchtime and will be open to all students from years 7 & 8. Week 1 will see a geography homework support session where students can come and find a quiet place to complete work with the help of the 6th form geography prefects. Week 2 will be fun geography-based activities such as geography bingo and quizzes. The 6th form geography prefects will also be helping to judge the “Young geographer of the year” competition with the theme “My Place.” Open to students in KS3 the competition involves students creating an A3 poster about their favourite place.

The poster should be high quality in terms of its design and include maps, photographs, and annotations of why that place is so important to the student. Deadline for submission is 14th January and there will be a prize for the winner and 3 runners up.

History & Politics

This half term our lunchtime societies were able to get underway at last. Thanks to our lead students from Year 13, younger students have been able to attend both Junior History Society and Debating Society and to find out about a range of topics that take them beyond the content of the National Curriculum.

Towards the end of term our Year 12 historians have also been mentoring Year 10 and 11 students in our new lunchtime History Clinic. We have had lots of positive feedback about these sessions from GCSE students. Thank you to all the 6th formers who have contributed.

The process for selecting our new Year 12 History & Politics prefects for 2022 has just begun, and we look forward to welcoming our new cohort of prefects and the many new initiatives they will lead in the New Year.

Languages

During this half term we have been able to resume many of our enrichment activities in Languages. A year 7 French club has launched and is proving to be very popular and the Year 7 Latin club is going from strength to strength. Year 8 Spanish students also had the opportunity to gain further insight into the “Día de los Muertos” traditions in Mexico.

Year 9 students have been attending Ancient Greek Society in which they have been following a Classical Greek Course, this has been extremely popular! Two of our Year 11 students have gained access to a Language Masterclass Course which is being provided by Trinity College Cambridge. They have already attended online classes and lectures and over the coming months will attend 6 in total.

Also, one of our Year 12 students has been participating in a similar scheme at Oxford University for French and Spanish and will also have the opportunity to spend a week there in the summer.



Maths & Computing

The UKMT Senior Maths Challenge took place on Thursday 11th November, with entries funded by the Development Office. 121 students took part, from Years 11, 12, and 13.

This competition gives students an opportunity to pit themselves against increasingly difficult questions, developing their problem-solving skills. It also allows them to compete at a national level against other maths students. Our students did very well in the SMC this year, achieving 36 Gold Awards, 47 Silver Awards and 29 Bronze Awards. Additionally, 36 students were invited to take part in the follow-on rounds, with 6 of these students competing in round 1 of the prestigious British Maths Olympiad. This next phase of the competition took place on Thursday 2nd December, and we are now awaiting their results.

In Computing, Enrichment Clubs are now in full swing. Sixth form students are leading the Year 7 Computing Club with, typically, 25 Year 7 students attend each week. In these sessions they learn about web development and programming using micro:bits. Year 9 students are further developing their programming skills using Lego Mindstorm kits, funded by the Development Office. The students have spent their lunchtimes designing and building robots using Lego and are now programming them to complete a variety of challenges, making the robots move around obstacles on the floor.

Religious Studies

The Key Stage 3 Philosophy Club is going from strength to strength and the year 11 RS prefects are doing an amazing job in leading the very popular lunchtime sessions. All those who participate are developing valuable listening, debating and critical thinking skills. This term they have been supported with great enthusiasm by our RS PGCE student Ms Morse. We hope that in the New Year we can expand the club to enable Key Stage 4 students to take part.

Music

Over the last few weeks it has been fantastic to see our students perform again in full ensembles on a number of occasions. The Jazz Band and Concert Band, along with the Year 12 A level group, entertained all year groups with their lively contributions to the excellent Festive Assemblies. A special mention should go to Rosa (U6E) and Matthew (U6G) who gained their first experience of conducting the band, both doing a great job.

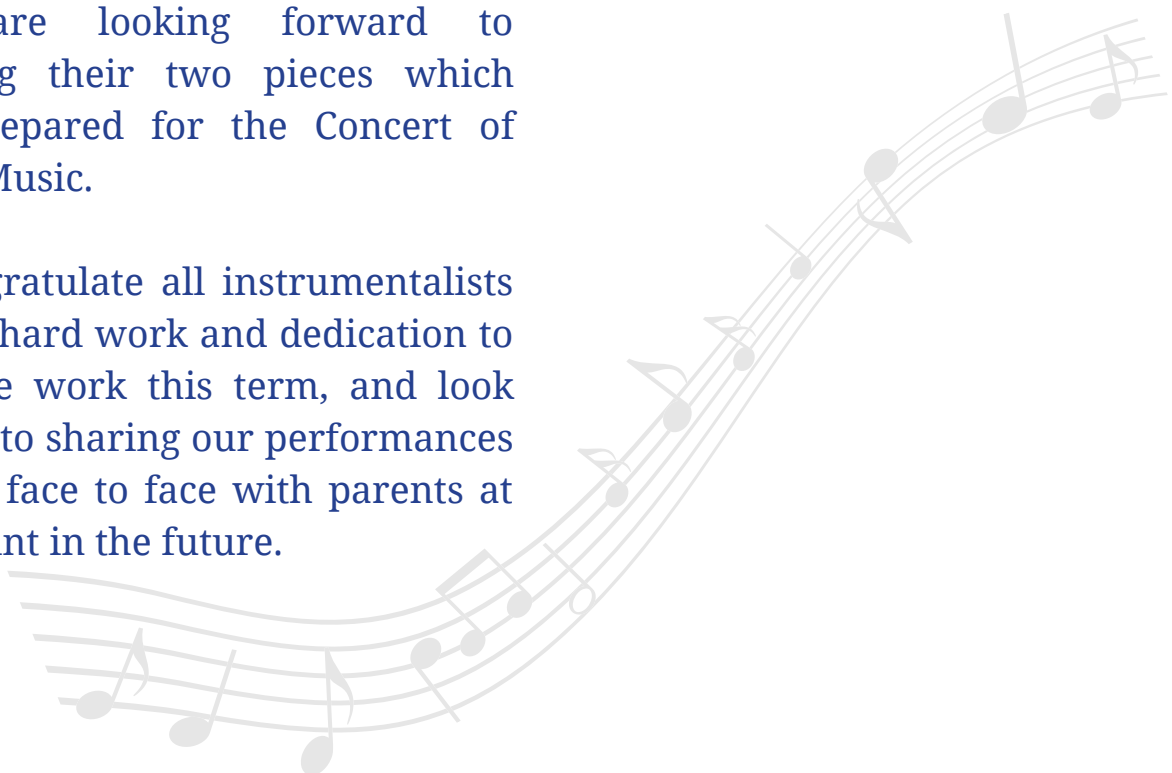
For young, aspiring conductors, taking your own school ensemble is a great way to gain podium experience and is something we will be encouraging more students to try their hand at. In addition, the school's Senior String Ensemble, who have made excellent progress this term, are looking forward to recording their two pieces which were prepared for the Concert of Festive Music.

We congratulate all instrumentalists on their hard work and dedication to ensemble work this term, and look forward to sharing our performances live and face to face with parents at some point in the future.

The Senior and Year 7 Choirs have been very busy recording the school's annual Carol Service. After weeks of rehearsals and two intensive days of recording in the Chapel we look forward to sharing this with the school community once the editing process is complete.

We were delighted to be able to use audio and video equipment which was purchased with the help of the School's Development Fund and enlisted the help of sixth formers Matthew (U6G) and Rory (L6H).

We hope that the final outcome will give those students who were involved a chance to celebrate their excellent performances with friends and family.



We were also delighted to welcome two new instrumental tutors to the school, Miss Emily Doan and Mr Dave Elliot who have taken over flute and percussion tuition respectively. Both are highly experienced performers and teachers and will provide inspirational guidance and support for our students.

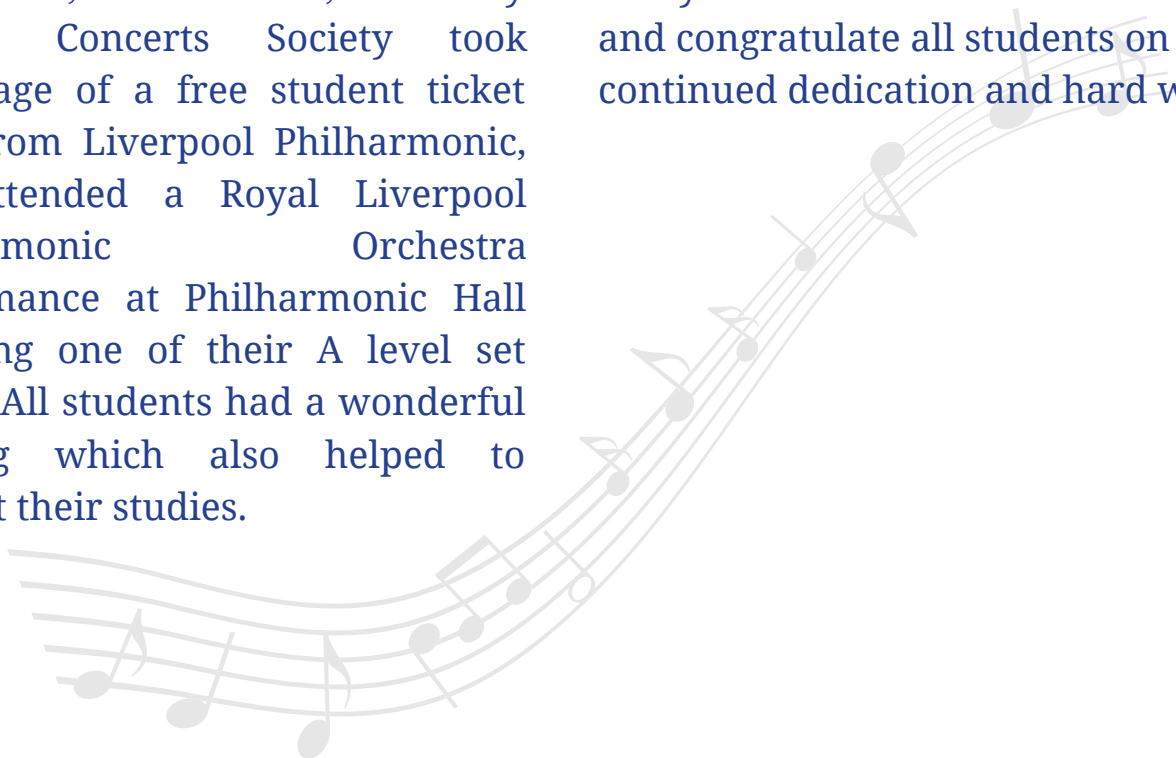
In the classroom, our 37 GCSE students recorded their final performance for their GCSE submission with many excellent results. Our Year 13 A-Level students submitted their applications to Universities and Colleges of Music with five of the six students applying to study music.

In addition, in November, the newly formed Concerts Society took advantage of a free student ticket offer from Liverpool Philharmonic, and attended a Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra performance at Philharmonic Hall featuring one of their A level set works. All students had a wonderful evening which also helped to support their studies.

We look forward to more concert visits in the new year, with twenty-seven students already signed up for a concert of Mozart's music in March.

Rehearsals for the school show, Little Shop of Horrors, continue apace, with fantastic work being done in all departments. All students, whether they be leads, ensemble, dancers or band members, have been working very hard and, as we reach the Christmas break, are looking forward to rehearsals in the New Year leading to our performances from the 14th -17th February 2022.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge all students who have taken and passed music and theory exams this term. We have heard of many brilliant individual successes and congratulate all students on their continued dedication and hard work.



PE

It has been a busy period in PE for extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities for students in KS3,4,5.

Football: Boys will continue in January 2022 in the Merseyside Cup and the Liverpool schools cup in all-year groups. Our U13 Girls came third in the LSFA tournament, and it is great to see Girls Football across the curriculum and through enrichment opportunities.

Netball League is underway and it is fantastic to see all teams from yr7-Seniors are undefeated. More to come after Christmas.

Hockey fixtures will continue from January 2022 and the department has been impressed with the skill levels exhibited by our year, 7/8 teams.

Its been pleasing to see new enrichment opportunities for our students, and local and national cross-country participation being welcomed by all.

Year 9/10 boys finished 3rd at the National Cross Country cup held at Calday Grange, qualifying for the North West Finals which were held in Manchester, finishing 7th overall.

Whole school teams from KS3,4,5 have also competed in 2 events in the Merseyside cross country league this year, and more to come in the new year.

Badminton: KS3 Boys finished 2nd in the LSSP Badminton competition, and KS3 Girls and KS4 Boys and Girls competitions have been moved to January 2022.

Handball: Year 9 and 10 Handball teams will compete in the England Handball National School Competition in January 2022.

Basketball: Finally we will have teams entering England Basketball Schools Competiton with our U14, U15, and U16 teams competing at the end of January 2022.

Table Tennis: Students continue in KS3,4 and 5 to enjoy lunchtime sessions of Table Tennis.

The Health and Fitness room is available for KS5 students at lunchtime.

A big thank you to all of our students, from the PE team, who have given up their time at lunch and after school to train, participate or enjoy the opportunity to pursue a Healthy Active lifestyle through the many enrichment opportunities available across all key stages.

Physics

This year the sixth-form Physicists have entered the UKSDC competition. The UK Space Design Competition (UKSDC) is a science, engineering and business challenges designed as a simulation of life in industry. Last year there were 8 members; Jamie, Charlie, Aidan, Vivek, Sol, Ram, Saumya and Harold. They won the Regional and National finals and Charlie Campbell got through to the international finals.

This year the team has an additional 4 members; Subil, Pratik, Milan and Kalp. They attended the regional finals on the 13th November in which they won again. The team along with another school came together to design a commercial spacecraft that would serve as an orbiting hotel, cruising around Earth and Mars following a trajectory known as the Aldrin Cycler.

This idea was originally proposed by the astronaut Buzz Aldrin.



The team had to follow an extensive set of requests for proposal set out for them by ‘The Foundation Society’ a mythical organisation based in the year 2052.

This challenge was to come together as a team and find solutions to complex problems that they had never seen before. They had to put forward original ideas to a group of well-respected professionals.

They are set to attend the in-person National finals mid-March, hosted by Imperial College London. In other physics news, Tabitha Bates and Aidan Randal sat the first round of the Physics Olympiad the results of which are due shortly.

Psychology

Thank you to the year 13 prefects who have run 5 Psychology Society talks this term which have been much appreciated by year 10 in particular. These have focused on psychopathology, social psychology and forensic psychology. Next term, the Year 12 Prefects will take forward the topics covered by year 13 and will build on the talks given this term.

Congratulations to all year 12 who applied for and were appointed Psychology Prefects.

In lessons, Year 12 have also been out and about working on their research skills by testing Working Memory and are currently engaged in a full academic write up which is great practice for university.

And... Year 13 are looking to successfully negotiate their mock exams and are working well towards their goals. We wish them luck in their mock examinations



Support Area Updates

The Development Office

Alumni Support

We are incredibly lucky to have an active and engaged international community of Old Blues (if this link doesn't carry over here it is www.bluecoatschoolliverpool.org.uk/old-blues) who are willing to get involved in our Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG) programme, from supporting our recent Year 11 virtual mock interviews series to providing an insight into their career via our online series '5 minutes with...'

Launched during the pandemic, the series has continued to grow, with our younger alumni now providing a glimpse into university life, with tips on supporting mental health and managing workload. Insights have also been provided into broadcasting, law, teaching, medicine, and finance.

Highlights from the series so far include:

- Ruvarashe Torto – Class of 2017 – Technical Customer Services Officer at BTTG
- Ian Brown – Class of 1990 – Civil and Structural Engineer currently working in Jeddah
- Anna Ashcroft – Class of 2019 – Dentistry undergraduate at Bristol University
- Duncan Cowan – Class of 2011 – Co-Founder and Chief Technical Officer at Howbout

The series is available to all students via our '5 minutes with...' Vimeo Showcase. Clips are also shared through the School's Microsoft Careers Teams. To access the series so far, please click [**here**](https://vimeo.com/showcase/7199988). Here is the link <https://vimeo.com/showcase/7199988>

Alumni Spotlight: Imran Mahmood

If you are hooked on the BBC's latest Sunday night drama 'You Don't Know Me', you might be interested to learn that the face behind the series is Old Blue and Criminal Defence Barrister Imran Mahmood, from the Class of 1987.

The new four-part series has been adapted from his bestselling thriller of the same name, published by Penguin in 2017.

The plot sees Hero accused of murder, with the evidence pointing overwhelmingly towards his guilt. However, he is convinced of his innocence and sets out to clear his name.

If your son or daughter is considering a career in law, please point them in the direction of Imran's '5 minutes with...' clip, which includes a fantastic insight into his career and top tips for success in the legal sector.

To access Imran's clip please click [here](https://vimeo.com/showcase/7199988/video/486886141). Just in case - <https://vimeo.com/showcase/7199988/video/486886141>



HAPPY
Christmas

Thank you all for your continued support.

Best wishes



Scilla Yates

