STOCKPORT GRAMMAR CLIMBING

NORTH WEST INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS CLIMBING COMPETITION 2025

Monday 3rd February marked the second edition of the North West Independent Schools Climbing Competition. The event has grown this year, with over 100 pupils taking part from First Year to Sixth Form, and each age category was very competitive.

As a school our pupils performed well across all ages, resulting in six podium places from the 10 pupils that took part.

In the First and Second Year girls category the top five was very tight. Katy Parker in her first competition for SGS did a fantastic job on the roped climbs, topping two and reaching a strong high point on the hardest offering. On the boulder problems Katy surprised herself, topping six of the eight, which secured third place overall.

The First and Second Year boys category was super competitive with a high standard of climbing. Archie Buck delivered an outstanding performance in his first outing for SGS. He was in the running after a strong showing on the roped climbs, and delivered under pressure on the boulder problems, topping all but one to come second overall.

Rupert Davies, in his first year in the boys Third and Fourth Year category, was climbing well. Again, the standard was very high and places close at the top. Any slip-up would make a huge difference. Ruppert held firm, topping all his roped climbs and six of the boulder problems. This meant he was able to finish in joint first place, even after the count back, which really shows how tight the standings were.

This year's Fifth Year and Sixth Form girls category had a stronger field and needed all pupils to climb at their best. After the roped climbs Caitlin Hill and Harriet 'the icon' Thomson were in a three-way tie for first place, with Alexa Ashwood in fourth. It would all come down to the bouldering. This was extremely tight, Harriet finishing a well-deserved third, missing out on second place by one zone hold. Caitlin managed to top one more problem than those she was tied with to take away the win. She retains the title from last year.

The Fifth Year and Sixth Form boys category is the most tightly contested age group, with a mistake being very costly.

Owen Morris was in the strong pack that made up the top five after a good performance on the boulder problems. He was a bit disappointed but stood a chance of a podium if he climbed to his potential under pressure. He was the first of the contenders to climb the final and hardest route after topping the others. It was a scrappy, yet technically good, performance as he made his way up and managed to top the route. It was a gritty performance that can only be described as a fight. Climber after climber failed in the crux lower down - only the top two coming into the final climb managed to also succeed.

After a long wait, Owen's performance on the final climb leap frogged him in to a well-deserved third place overall.

Although not everyone managed to reach the podium, they all climbed well and hopefully took a lot away from the experience. For those who it was their first time, I hope they enjoyed the challenge and can take something away with them. Those that had moved up a category, there is always next year. Well done to everyone.

Mr Adam Hughes
Outdoor Education Co-ordinator