

It has been an unusually quiet week for much of the time. With Y11s coming towards the end of their GCSEs and with many of our younger students out on the "bushcraft" trip, numbers have been depleted on site at least, that is, until the arrival of lots of primary children. As well as facilitating some early transition visits, Miss Bradbury also hosted Crakehall Primary School for a wonderful Science afternoon as part of a joint venture having made a successful bid for funding linked to the "Polar Challenge". On Monday and Thursday afternoons, we also invited more than a hundred children from all the local primaries to use our hall as a rehearsal space for a musical extravaganza that is being prepared for later in the term. It is always an exciting time of the year but this year seems even more so. Along with senior colleagues, I am getting "out and about" visiting a number of primary schools and in a few weeks we look forward to meeting all our new Y7's on their induction days.

Our local MP, Rishi Sunak, has been in school today. He spoke eloquently to all our Y9 and Y10 students in assembly and this was followed up with a question and answer session with a group of Y9 students who have already begun their GCSE course in Citizenship Studies. They were a credit to themselves and the school, as we have come to expect. In between, Mr Sunak met with governors, staff and parents who also represent "Brand Bedale". Currently, we are working closely with a number of local employers to develop careers education and guidance as well as employability skills. As ever, the focus for this kind of work comes in KS4 and for many students the most important factor is selecting the right post-16 provider. It was great, therefore, to see the vast majority of Y10s coming back from their first visit, to Queen Elizabeth's Sixth Form, buzzing with excitement. Whilst we continue to benefit from a partnership arrangement with QE, we provide our students with access to the full range of opportunities. Students interested in a more vocational approach will be able to visit Darlington College and, over the next few months, Mr Chapman will ensure that representatives from all local schools and colleges speak to our students in assemblies and are invited to the various open evenings that tend to happen in the autumn term. Several teachers approached Mr Chapman to comment on how keen to learn our students were. Psychology described our students as 'eloquent and articulate' whilst one of the Law teachers commented on how they were 'full of empathy, amazing, bright and engaged. They coped superbly well with difficult content including Latin.' Well done to all students involved in showing such enthusiasm! It has proved an extremely valuable day in the wider context of starting to make those Post-16 choices.

The Y7 and Y8 students on the "bushcraft" trip seem to have had a tiring but exciting few days. If you haven't seen the photographs on our Facebook page, I would urge you to have a look as they give a far better flavour of what has been going on than my words can even begin to describe. As well as focusing on team-building, Mr Burgess wanted students to experience activities that would take them out of their comfort zone and develop strength of character. We talk a lot about resilience in school and want our students to become adept at "coping" no matter what may be thrown at them and, in part, this "expedition" has been designed to promote this concept. Oh, and I should say that we also wanted them to have a really, really good time!!!

Finally, a couple of warnings for parents. As you are probably aware, all local Headteachers are proactive in issuing "early warnings" wherever possible around substance misuse so I would strongly recommend that you note the message below from Mr Kelly about drugs in the Reeth/Catterick Garrison area. I would also like to flag up concerns in school over the computer game, Fortnite. Some parents have reported that their children have spent large sums of money on "upgrades" without their prior knowledge but the biggest worry of all is the sheer amount of time that some students seem to be spending on the game. Next week, our Parents' Forum (Thursday, 21st June at 6.00pm) is focused on internet safety and how you, as parents, can support your teens through what is an increasingly dangerous world. We will also touch on this latest Fortnite phenomenon too but, in the meantime, please do what you can to support us by limiting game time to rewards and "down" time after school work and other, more productive activities have been completed.

Police Warning re Drugs in Local Area:

Police have notified schools in the area to be aware of a tablet known as 'Laugh today, Cry tomorrow'. The content of the tablet is not confirmed at this stage but potentially contains MDMA/ Ecstasy. Two young people in the area have recently been hospitalised due to becoming unwell after sharing one of these tablets. Supply of the tablet is reported to have come from the Reeth or Catterick Garrison Area. We think it is important to keep parents aware of potential risks like this in the local area in order to support your own actions in safeguarding your children. Please do report any concerns to the police.

Children Unwell in School:

Please can we remind parents of the correct procedure to follow if your child starts to feel unwell while in school. In the first instance, they should report it to their classroom teacher, who will make a decision as to whether they are well enough to remain in class, or if they need to report to Reception. Once they arrive at Reception, the student will be checked by the on-duty first aider and a member of the pastoral support team will also speak to them to ascertain more information. If it is something minor that seems likely to pass in a short time, for example a headache that could be triggered by dehydration, they will be given a drink and either given the opportunity to sit out of class for a short time to recover, or told to return to class and to come back if they do not soon feel better. If the problem is obviously more serious, or persists with no sign of improvement, we will contact parents to see if we can make arrangements for them to be collected.

Please remind you son/daughter that they should not contact you directly to be collected from school if they feel unwell. It is important that they go through the procedure above so that we can be sure of contacting parents at the right stage. If they do contact you directly, please tell them to see a member of staff who will ensure they are checked and then you will be contacted if necessary. While the majority of students are following the correct procedures, we have had several recent incidents of parents turning up at school to collect their child, without school being aware that they have even been contacted. This sends completely the wrong message to students, a small number of whom may be tempted to use this as a tactic to avoid certain lessons/tests/detentions etc. Many thanks for your support with this.

Mrs Brittain stated that on Saturday 9th June, she had the pleasure of going to York Stadium for the day with a number of our students who were successful in qualifying to represent Hambleton & Richmondshire in the North Yorkshire athletics championships. The standard of athletics was absolutely fantastic, as was the sunny weather. Charlie Donaldson ran in the 800m, Amy Pointon competed in Discus, Joe Chisholm competed in Javelin and Relay and Tafari Nicholas competed in the 100m finishing 3rd in the final, also competing in the 400m where he came 1st which was a superb achievement. Well done to all of them for being selected and competing at the North Yorkshire Event.

Year 10 were asked to step up and take key leadership roles this week as we invited applications for prefects. These really are key roles in allowing our students to lead, contribute and shape their own future here at Bedale High School. The prefect process is a rigorous one with students having strict criteria to hit before they will be considered for these prestigious roles. Tutors also shared information about how to apply for Head Boy and Girl positions. Applications must be made in writing to Mr Chapman by Friday, 22nd June and students must set out their vision for their role, the skills and experience they possess and state what their legacy would be beyond next year. There are several excellent candidates in Year 11 and competition promises to be fierce!

Bedale High School have a stall at Bedale Festival on Sunday and invite all our parents and students to drop by and say hello. There will be displays of students' work and a montage of BHS highlights from the year and also fantastic logo design and haiku challenges to take part in. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Congratulations

Katie Dixon ran in the Darlington 5km Cancer Research Race for Life (raceforlife.cancerresearchuk.org) on Sunday 10th June, raising money in memory of her Grandma and her Uncle. She came 5th overall (out of approx 1500 participants).

Attachments

1. Year 7 Thorp Perrow letter.
2. Year 9 and Year 10 Iceland Geography trip letter.