

Two weeks to go until the end of term, and I'm sure that even the 'scroogiest' ones among us will be thinking about putting up the tree this weekend if we have not already done so!

As always, the end of term is a busy time and there is a lot going on, so this week's email contains several prompts/notices/reminders for parents to be aware of.

### **Christmas Jumper Day and Staff vs Student Football**

As promised, Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December is Christmas Jumper Day. Students and staff can pay £1 if they wish to wear a festive jumper and the money will go towards Save The Children. Form tutors will collect money on Friday morning in form time. On this day, we allow the jumper to replace the school blazer, or it can be worn beneath the blazer, **but all other aspects of school uniform need to be in place as normal**. Please do not allow students to come into school with trainers/jeans/tracksuit bottoms/makeup etc – we do not want students spending the day in Inclusion because they have chosen to abuse this opportunity. Also, - please ensure that no offensive/rude/explicit designs are worn...it's amazing what can be classed as 'Christmas clothing' these days! Form Tutors will be reminding students as we go through the week, and we look forward to seeing the usual colourful display of sartorial elegance!

Regular readers (if there is such a thing?!) will remember a brief write up of the staff vs student rugby match last half-term. Having established our superiority in netball and football last year, the staff team were rocked by an awesome display of rugby finesse as the student team steamrolled to victory on that occasion. I anticipate a return to the status quo next Friday lunchtime when we take them on again - this time with a proper shaped ball (sorry Mr Moulding) in the staff vs student charity football match. Training has already begun and such is the commitment in this team that not a single mince pie has passed through our collective staff lips. A strict athlete's diet, managed and overseen with single-minded determination by Mr Gill, has been in place for the last few weeks. It's unorthodox – I saw him tucking into some jam roly-poly and custard today, but in Gill we trust.

### **Congratulations to...**

**Oliver Ward** for winning the **Bedale Festival Poetry competition** with his poem 'Snow'. The competition was open to students in Year 7 and Year 8 over the last few weeks. Oliver did well to beat off stiff competition from a large number of entries, including **Ryan McGuinness** in Year 8 who eventually finished runner-up. Please keep an eye out on Facebook for some pics and copies of the poems.

**Tom White** in Yr 11. He has just had his passing out parade for the North Yorkshire Police Cadets, and is now a fully-fledged cadet. This explains his very effective and authoritative approach to prefect corridor duties at lunchtime!

### **Student Wellbeing Champions**

As part of our ongoing efforts to keep emotional welfare high on everyone's agenda, we have enrolled two members of staff onto a Compass Buzz course which is designed to help schools initiate their own student wellbeing scheme, using 'student champions' to lead the project in school. More information will follow, but I hope that this will be a really effective way of ensuring that staff and students work together to safeguard our collective welfare.

### **Iceland Trip**

Parents of older students may remember that our Geography department have previously run very successful trips to Iceland. We have always been keen to replicate this as the feedback was so positive from the last excursion. The nature of the trip means that we have to plan it far in advance, so we are looking at March 2021. Mr Childe is leading the trip and has attached some initial information – please have a read and complete the attached reply slip if you are interested in this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

## **Head of Key Stage 4 Post**

Mr Chapman is stepping down from this post at the end of this term. I would like to thank him for making such a positive contribution to the day to day school experiences of students in Yr 9-11 over the last couple of years. He has worked very hard with Form Tutors to improve the provision in form time every morning, and is responsible for building up a vital network of business contacts (the Business Friends of BHS). Mr Chapman launched our first ever Work Ready Week which ensures that Year 10 students get realistic and meaningful careers experiences, and has also ensured that our post-16 providers promote themselves to younger year groups in school, giving students more time to think about their pathways after school. Internal interviews will take place next week, after which we will confirm the new postholder.

## **Year 11 PPE Exams**

Well done to the Yr 11s for completing their first set of PPE exams. It's fair to say that this has been an exhausting period for most of the students. The vital thing now is to ensure that they learn from this experience – revising from now on in regular bite-sized chunks is the way forward. Relatively few students will be achieving all their target grades at this stage, but these exams are a good indicator of how far they have to go, and of how important it is to be organised and committed to a thorough revision programme.

While many students can feel very proud of their effort and attitude through these exams, we still have a number who did not prepare well, and some who simply gave up when faced with a tough exam paper. I am not talking about those who genuinely struggle to control anxiety around exam time, but those who simply could not be bothered to try, or who did so little revision that they could not perform in the exam. These students will be re-doing some papers until their teachers are happy that they have done themselves justice. For a small number, their town pass will be withdrawn until these issues have been resolved. I thank parents in advance for their support with this.

## **Year 7 & 8 Netball; Year 7-9 Cross Country**

Miss Temple writes: On Tuesday I took our Year 7 and 8 netball teams to Richmond School. This was the first ever competitive game for our year 7s, so it was an excellent learning experience for the girls. The girls worked extremely hard, and while the result didn't go their way, there were lots of positives to take away from the game. A special mention to Lily-Mai Chadwick who was voted as player of the match by her own teammates for some outstanding defending.

For the year 8 girls they were looking for their first ever win together and that is exactly what they got! They came back from losing 9-3 at half time to win 12-11! The girls have displayed excellent commitment and resilience over the last year to improve their skills; they have worked really hard in lessons and attended training sessions at lunchtime and after school every week. I was extremely proud watching them today, they were amazing! The shooting dream team made up of Ella and Iris were unstoppable, with Ella scoring the winning goal in the last second of the game to make the final score 12-11. The girls decided to give the player of the match award to the whole team as it was a fantastic team effort. Well done to all girls involved!

On Thursday we attended the area cross country trials at Northallerton Leisure Centre. We took 16 students to the trials (unfortunately some students missed out due to illness). Only the top 12 runners (10 selected plus 2 reserve runners) for each age range (Y7-9 combined) would be selected to run for the area. Held on a flat course in Northallerton, students once again represented Bedale with pride. The following students have been selected and go through to the County Championships held at Tadcaster School on the 18th January 2020:

Y7: Sam Ogier (5th place), Charlotte Lewis (5th place)

Y8: Bella Spencer (11th – 1st Reserve)

Y9: Joshua Hammett (1st place) & Alistair Banks (4th place).

Well done to all students involved!

## **Attendance**

Parents will be aware that we have been hit hard with a sweeping virus over the last couple of weeks. Thank you for exercising sensible judgement over how long to keep children off if they do get the virus. In the vast majority of cases, 48 hours is more than adequate. I do have some concerns around some students who have been off for several days, seemingly due to more minor ailments – coughs and colds etc. Please help us to maintain the strong ethos around school attendance that we have all worked so hard to achieve. It is one of the key indicators of a 'Good' school and it is vital that we protect this – we know from experience how hard it is to catch up on missed teaching, and the damaging impact that this can have on outcomes further down the line.

## **Events & Reminders**

**Contributions for Art, Textiles and Design Technology:** Thank you so much to all the parents who have kindly donated £10 through Parentpay following our request a couple of weeks ago. Every penny helps us to secure the ability to maintain high quality resources for these lessons, workshops and projects.

**Year 7 Parent Evening:** 4pm-7pm, Weds 11<sup>th</sup> December – please remind your son/daughter to ensure that they have collated appointments for you with their teachers. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Christmas Showcase:** 6.30pm-8pm, Weds 18<sup>th</sup> December – please see the attached poster for more details of this popular event.

**Auction of Promises:** 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 – letters went out to all students this week. We are now very keen to secure a range of offers of services, products, experiences etc from anyone in the community who could provide something for the auction. The information is attached to this email again.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Melly', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.