

So it's official – we are halfway through this academic year already! Well done and thank-you to our community of students, parents, staff, governors and other supporters for making it such a positive year so far. We hope that the coming weeks bring further success on many fronts, but one main focus is upon our Year 11s and helping them prepare for the forthcoming GCSE exams as we enter the final crucial weeks of preparation.

### **BBC Radio Two Competition**

Imagine a world where a magical telescope transports you from one strange realm to another...this is just one of the storylines to feature in our Year 7 entries for the BBC Radio 2 500 Words competition. Keep an eye out on Facebook for more details to follow, and we will aim to publish some of the best entries on the school website over the coming weeks. Mr Chapman asked me to read a few entries yesterday; I took them home and asked my daughter (Yr 7) to have a read too – she was immediately inspired to write her own entry so they must have been good!

### **Healthy Schools Award**

*Mr Childe writes:* On Tuesday afternoon, the Programme Lead from the Local Authority (Ruth Stacy) and a local councillor visited school to meet with students for the press photo call. A professional photographer was also on hand to take plenty of photos for their website. Our students were brilliant and made such a positive impression.

Following the launch event at Harlow Carr Gardens in the Autumn Term, I was really excited about getting involved in the Healthy Schools scheme. After a meeting with the school's leadership team, I agreed that we would apply for the Silver Award, and focus on the themes of Emotional Health and Wellbeing and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). I feel that in secondary schools, staff and students are facing increasing pressures from both inside and outside the classroom. There is an ongoing challenge to get the balance right when it comes to ensuring that we are giving our students the best possible academic provision, while also taking good care of the emotional health and wellbeing of everyone within our school community. It is vital that we keep this issue at the forefront of our plans and commitments as we move forward.

I am looking forward to 'formalising' the school's approach to supporting and promoting emotional health and wellbeing across our school community – and believe that participation in the Healthy Schools programme will help us achieve this goal.

Already, we have developed a staff wellbeing group, appointed two Year 11 student leaders for 'student wellbeing' and begun a review of our taught PSHE curriculum that every single student receives. The school is also working hard to ensure that the importance of emotional health and wellbeing, (and not just academic success), are integral to everything we do. Please see the attached document for the full press release, and take a look at Facebook for some fab photos.

### **Health and Wellbeing – Live Band Event**

Mr Childe has organised for upcoming band The HARA, to perform in school on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March with the aim of raising awareness about emotional health and wellbeing. The HARA will give advice on how to stay safe online as well as discussing cyber bullying and where to go for help. They will also discuss personal stories i.e. a time when one of them was affected by cyber bullying and the outcome of the situation. In addition, they will discuss mental health, the causes of mental health problems (stress at school, relationships etc), who to turn to for help and the importance of speaking up. The talk will be very interactive, involving student participation and response. At the end, there will be time for questions, followed by an autograph session for the students. Look out for photos and a write up in the next newsletter!

## Well Done To...

- Peggy Vennell and Natasha Chapman – our very own Eco-Warriors! They decided to do a presentation to their tutor group on Wednesday morning about the importance of taking care of our environment. The girls spoke about recycling, ocean pollution, alternatives to plastic and even the wild fires in Australia. A brilliant effort from the girls which earned them this week's Hot Choc with the Head award...see Facebook for pics.
- Ellie-Kay McArthur, Libby Loughlin and Oliver Ward for being brilliant representatives of the school when we attended the Bedale Primary School Open Evening on Monday.
- The Year 7 boys play who play for the Hawks football club in Bedale and have reached the semi-finals...we wish them luck and hope to see them make it through to the final!
- Anna Donaldson, Libby Loughlin, Katie Grainger and Isabella who are working hard to become expert riders under the support of Mrs Riley-Fox.
- Sam Ogier and Charlotte Lewis for representing school at County level in Cross Country.
- Abi Smith for her recent success in a gymnastics competition and for her performances in Joseph with Stage Coach in the Autumn Term.

## Bedale Primary School – Yr 5 Taster Day

It was great to welcome the BPS Year 5s into school this week for their first taster day. We are offering sessions from all curriculum areas as we build up the opportunities for Year 5s across the area to come and get a sense of the 'BHS experience' for themselves. This week they enjoyed an afternoon of History with Mr Gill. I have copied the message from their teacher, Mrs Brown, so that you can get a sense of the experience they received...hopefully Mr Gill's head will not swell too much!

*'Please can I first say a huge thank you to yourself and Mr Gill (such a fantastic teacher) for the fabulous taster session my class enjoyed on Tuesday. We were warmly welcomed and the lesson was engaging, challenging and hugely enjoyable. The kids were buzzing on the way back and would happily have turned up for a full day on Wednesday – they were sold!*

*Can I also take this opportunity to say how valuable our PE sessions have been with Miss Temple – another fantastic teacher. My class love their Wednesday mornings. They are all certainly looking forward to Year 7!*

Thank you to Miss Bradbury for organising these events, and to the staff who are delivering. Photos of this session are on Facebook.

## Science Live! – Yr 10 Trip

*Mrs Jennison writes:* On Wednesday of this week the science department took 34 Year 10 students to "Science Live!" in Sheffield. The students heard 5 of Britain's top scientists working at the cutting edge of their specialisms. First up was Professor Tony Ryan who explained the science of hydroponics: the growing of plants without soil, just water and nutrients. Professor Ryan and his team brought the technology to a Syrian refugee camp and showed the refugees how they could grow their own food using just mattresses. The polyurethane foam is able to hold the water and support the plants. The 'used' mattresses contained plenty of 'nutrients'! Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, a self-confessed 'lunatic' for her love of all things Lunar was up next. She described how her interest in the moon came about, the theories about how it was formed, the importance of the moon in cultures across the world and finally how it is moving away from us at a rate of 3.5cm/year. Next up was Professor Dave Cliff. He discussed the future of technology and how computer chips are limited by the physical properties of silicon. Living organisms such as moulds and cultures of bacteria might

one day replace silicon. Professor Alice Roberts explained why the dog really is 'man's best friend'. The dog evolved from the European Grey wolf 130,000 years ago and they are the oldest known companion animals of humans; 30-40 000 years. Finally, Professor Robert Winston talked about fertility, conception and development in the womb. The odds are stacked against each process so it is amazing we are all here. Stewart Cheney, a senior science examiner gave the student valuable tips on approaching their Science GCSE examinations next year and where mistakes are often made.

The students behaved impeccably and were a credit to the school.

### **Yr 11 PPEs – Round 2!**

When we return from the half-term break, Yr 11s will go straight into revision week before their PPE exams begin week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> March. Please use all means available to support them in adopting an organised and thorough approach to revision over half-term. It is vital that we help them get the balance right between working hard, and ensuring they still get plenty of fresh air, relaxation and exercise to keep mind and body fighting fit too. I have attached some different models of revision timetables in case parents want to sit down with them and help them organise their work. One of the biggest challenges is getting them to break things down. Sometimes, the idea of revision is so overwhelming (because of the amount of content they need to cover) that they can fall into the trap of either avoiding it altogether, or of not doing it well and therefore wasting time. Parents and siblings can play a crucial role in supporting with this: helping create flash-cards; testing them on small bite-size chunks of information; encouraging them to mix up revision methods (internet research, mind maps, past exam questions etc) or even just taking them a cup of tea at the right time! As well as the attached revision timetables, I have also added the link you have seen before to the materials from the GCSE Support Evening earlier this year. There is some useful guidance here to support parents and students: <https://bedalehighschool.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Yr-11-GCSE-Info-Evening-2019.pdf>

In school, the ongoing support and intervention continues with the mentoring scheme, after-school revision sessions and targeted lessons. In other words, everything is in place to help them succeed – we just need to keep supporting and encouraging to ensure that they engage with the help on offer, and that they 'do their bit' by settling down to their own programme of revision.

### **Dental and Medical Appointments**

Please can I ask parents to try wherever possible to organise these after school, or if that is not possible, to avoid students missing the whole day for appointments. I know that with hospital appointments we have virtually no choice as to when they are scheduled, but there is usually more flexibility around dental appointments. We are currently working on a recovery plan for our whole school attendance, following a really tough start to the year. It remains one of the key indicators of a good school, (which we are judged upon), but more importantly than this – high levels of attendance are the foundation of for individual success at school (both academically and socially). Thank you for your support with this.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Kelly

Headteacher

