

As the week draws to a close, I can reflect on lots of positive conversations with our Y11 students, many of whom seem to have responded to the challenge of their second round of pre-public exams and demonstrated substantial improvements from the first set of "mocks" before Christmas. However, early feedback from staff would appear to suggest that too many are still far too complacent and have, yet again, misjudged the need for extended and effective revision at home. If this applies to your son or daughter, please be assured that we will be raising these issues in school. However, at home, we would be grateful if you could emphasise the age-old maxim that you "only get out what you put in". The students who did most well last year were not always the most able students. Rather, they were the ones who showed grit and determination, got themselves organised, sought help where necessary and simply demonstrated a sustained commitment. Please find attached a timetable highlighting the Y11 revision sessions to be held over the Easter break, it would be appreciated if you could encourage your son/daughter to attend these vital sessions.

Next week, we turn our attention to Y10s and the parents evening on Thursday provides us with an opportunity to discuss learning and progress as well as preparations for the forthcoming Y10 exams on May 1st. As a year group, we know that they hold tremendous potential and, generally, they have made a successful start to their GCSE courses. However, individually, and you will know this as parents, there are always subjects/topics that need more attention so the exams will provide students with a chance to demonstrate how much they have learned so far and, for teachers, it will help to identify any gaps in knowledge and understanding. We need ALL our students, therefore, to give of their best and part of this will involve getting used to the demands of revision for multiple exams at the same time. Exam success obviously depends on the ability to retrieve information and use it productively within the context of a formal exam. Whilst we can "teach" certain aspects of this in class and again in the students' "revision week" just prior to the exams, it is vital that our students are also encouraged to develop and sharpen their skills at home through regular practice. We look forward to seeing all Y10 parents next week but, if there is a reason why anyone is unable to attend, we would be very grateful if you could make contact with your son or daughter's form tutor.

Yesterday, Mr Kelly continued with his "induction" as Headteacher, representing the school at the Primary Headteachers' Cluster meeting and our links with all local primary schools continue to develop. On Monday and Tuesday we hosted 2 cluster primary tennis competitions which saw students from y3, 4, 5 and 6 competing to qualify for the next round. For me, the most pleasing aspect was seeing 10 of our own students acting in the capacity of sports leaders, officiating, organising, scoring and generally just "running the show"! Along with programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, this focus on developing our students as leaders marks out Bedale as being different to most schools and, having established this culture as Deputy Head, I know that Mr Kelly will continue to promote it at every opportunity. As ever, the Primary colleagues, and the children, went away highly impressed and we look forward to hosting more events next term!

Our assemblies this week have focused on reflections on life in multi-cultural Britain. In a week where the atrocities in New Zealand have caused us to reflect on our own values, Mr Kelly focused on the message that when we use hateful words, it can quickly lead to hateful actions. It is so important for our students (and in fact all of us) to choose our words carefully and to consider their impact, whether in conversation or in written form. For many of our students, this is particularly relevant in regard to their use of social media.

Out of school, on Monday, Mr Bielby took 26 students from different year groups to Wensleydale RUFC in Leyburn. We teamed up with The Wensleydale School to participate in a RFU training night where students had a chance to experience various rugby related activities including a skill session, small and large sided games, finishing off with some well-earned food in the club house. Thank you to the RFU and Wensleydale RUFC for coming together and delivering an excellent night of rugby. On Thursday, the area plate football semi-finals took place against Easingwold at home. It was a hard fought game but sadly the Y7 boys were beaten 8 - 4 with Jack Wilkinson earning the man of the match award. Congratulations however, go to the Y9 team who won 11 - 0 with Charlie Lancaster scoring a hat-trick and being rightly chosen as man of the match. We will now play the winners of SFX v Stokesley in the plate final.

Looking ahead to the period after the Easter break, parents should note the brevity of our next half term. Staff in school have been encouraged to think long and hard about the structure of teaching units in a very unbalanced term which actually has only 18 teaching days before the half term break. As well as

having a Bank Holiday in this period, we also have a training day. The school, if you remember has chosen to move this from the first day of term to the end of the first week, thereby avoiding the complications of transport issues on the Tour de Yorkshire day.

Attachments

- Y11 GCSE provisional summer timetable;
- Y11 Easter revision timetable;
- Y10 Parents' Evening letter;
- Bedale Town Council bicycle parade for the Tour de Yorkshire