

Welcome back from half-term – I hope that families managed to find some time together and that despite the awful weather – you managed to enjoy yourselves! A busy newsletter this week so please take a few minutes to check any sections that may be especially relevant to you or your child.

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

We are incredibly proud of Lily and Lucy Archer who went to Atlanta, USA over the half term break to participate in the Cheersport Nationals Cheerleading competition with the rest of their squad. They went praying for zero deductions, but they absolutely nailed it! 2 days of competitions, 2 zero deductions badges, a GOLD MEDAL and a massive trophy that had its own compartment on the plane! See the link here for further details of this awesome achievement – more photos can be seen on Facebook.

<http://www.richmondshiretoday.co.uk/lazer-cheer-academy-wins-in-atlanta/>

### **School Closure on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Feb**

A massive thank-you to parents and staff for their response to my decision to close on Monday. It is not a decision I take lightly and is always a last resort. I am well aware of the inconvenience it causes to parents, staff and students and the last minute arrangements that frantically need to be put in place when something like this happens. The difficulty on Monday was the fact that the heaviest snow coincided with the time when people would be traveling. My journey from Thirsk was a difficult one and I was nearly 'off-road' on two occasions. When I arrived in school just after 7am, there were already 4 messages from staff who were stuck on their way to school. Some buses were clearly going to struggle but the biggest issue was that I would not have enough staff in school to safely supervise students. I made the decision to close at about 7.20am once I had managed to get through to the bus companies. I did not want to delay the decision and have people setting off from Richmond, Harrogate, York, Leeds and other places where staff live, only to risk a dangerous journey or long delays. Another issue we faced was that the member of staff who puts the message on our website was already stuck! I was somewhat reassured later in the day when I discovered that Risedale, SFX, Richmond, Wensleydale and Bedale Primary School had also had to close...but let's hope that's it for this winter!

### **Yr 11 PPEs Round 2**

This week the second round of Yr 11 Pre-Public Exams have started with Art and MFL already underway. The other subjects will run through next week. There is a massive ongoing effort to support these students as we approach the most critical preparation period before the real exams. I have talked about this in detail in recent newsletters, but to briefly summarise: one to one mentoring with allocated staff; after school/form-time/lunchtime revision sessions; revision week; access arrangements; prom passport (see below); targeted in-lesson interventions; regular signposting and reminders of support channels.

### **Yr 11 - Prom Passport Launch**

On Thursday this week Mr Gill spoke to Yr 11 about the PPEs to remind them of key procedures and routines. Miss Temple then launched this year's Prom Passport scheme. We firmly believe that it is a privilege to be invited to this end of school celebration event, and I'll be completely honest and say that we do use it as an incentive to encourage students to really engage with all the help on offer in school, and to take a very proactive approach to their exam preparation. Students can earn points towards their passport through 'doing the basics': excellent attendance over the remaining weeks;

displaying good attitude to learning; being successful in their PPEs, attending revision classes and good behaviour. We have attached the presentation that was used so that parents are also clear on how this will work. In previous years, this has been one of the key interventions that helps to keep students focussed in the final few weeks. Should you have any questions, please do contact Miss Temple in the first instance.

### **Yr 7-10: World Book Day**

The English Department is organising a competition for World Book Day on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March. The students are going to be asked to match the staff member with the name of their favourite character from a work of non-fiction. The idea is to encourage students to have those wider conversations about books and reading. As part of the day, students in Yr 7-10 (and any willing staff!) will have the opportunity to come into school dressed in costume as a famous literary character as part of a prize-winning competition for the best costume. Those who choose to do so will pay £1 which will go towards the fund-raising for new books for the school library. **I must stress that this is not a non-uniform day – costumes must be actual ‘costumes’ and not just students coming into school in casual clothes claiming to be some arbitrary teenager from a book!**

### **Yr 11 – Rotary Youth Leadership Award**

Readers will already be aware of the support that we receive from the Rotary Club of Northallerton Mowbray – many of our students have really benefitted from the experiences that this partnership can offer. I'd like to urge parents of Yr 11s to have a read of the attached Rotary newsletter that gives information about the Youth Leadership Award. I have had students participate in this scheme when I worked at another school, and I cannot recommend it highly enough. It truly was an incredible experience for them and the last young person I worked with who took part in the scheme described it to me as 'life changing'. For some reason, in the past we have struggled to find interest from BHS but I really hope that we can change that this year. The newsletter outlines how you can register your interest – please have a read!

### **Year 8 Options**

Thank-you to the parents and students who came to the Options Evening on Wednesday this week – it was really well attended. Hopefully the discussions will prove to be a useful support in the decision-making process that now ensues. I would just like to remind parents to really encourage their children to think about the subjects they enjoy the most. We do not expect 12 and 13 year old students to know what they want to do with the rest of their lives at this point, but we do know that the 3 pathways we have will ensure that they have a broad enough spectrum of qualifications to access a range of different post-16 progression routes. The next stage of the process is that next week, Yr 8s will have assembly presentations from each different subject area throughout the week. I have also attached a copy of the Options Presentation that reminds parents of key guidance and deadlines. Please contact Mr Gill or your child's Form Tutor if you have any concerns or questions.

### **Wensleydale Rugby Club**

Please see the attached poster that Wensleydale Rugby Club have produced to promote their girls' rugby team. They are really keen to recruit new players and we have an increasing pool of girls' talent to pull from!

## **RAF Air Cadets – Open Evening 4<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30pm**

2337(Northallerton) Squadron, RAF Air Cadets, are holding an Open Evening at the Cadet Hall on Thirsk Road, Northallerton DL6 1PF. The Air Cadets offer fantastic opportunities to anyone aged between 12 and 20 as well as working within our local community in charitable and public events. We would be delighted to show what we can offer to students and hope to see some of you at the event. Please contact me should you have any questions:

Plt Off Mike Donnelly

Squadron Adjutant

2337 (Northallerton) Squadron

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## **Upcoming Events**

- 11<sup>th</sup> March – Year 10 Parent Evening (4pm-7pm)
- 12<sup>th</sup> March – Year 11 Student revision day: Elizabethan England for AQA GCSE (9-1) History – in York
- W/C 16<sup>th</sup> March – Year 11 Food Tech NEA
- 28<sup>th</sup> March – Duke of Edinburgh Weekend (more details to follow)