

It's Christmaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaas! (Nearly)

Well actually, we have only just passed the halfway mark in this half-term – but it's creeping up closer and closer. There are several subtle indicators that have made it impossible for me to ignore the impending festive period:

1. Miss Bradbury's smile is getting wider by the day
2. Miss Bradbury put up our school Christmas tree this week (with some help from a couple of willing students)
3. Miss Bradbury asked me to confirm that we will be going ahead with our school Christmas Jumper Day on Friday 13th December (and we will be – details to follow next week!)
4. We have updated Miss Bradbury's staff photo:



There must be other staff who are excited about Christmas – but BHS's very own Little Miss Christmas is definitely peaking early!

Assemblies This Week

We have been treated to a couple of fabulous student-led assemblies this week. On Tuesday, 8CTE spoke to Yr 7 and Yr 8 students about one of our core values – commitment. They reminded us of the everyday opportunities that we have as students and teachers to show real commitment – and the rewards we are likely to get when we do so. On Wednesday, 9JST spoke to Yr 9 and Yr 10 students about the benefits of Healthy Living and Exercise. Some powerful messages from both assemblies, and although it is often a challenging experience for students to stand and present in front of a large audience – it really is one of the 'work-ready' skills that we try to promote through different forums in school.

National School's Equestrian Association

I'm delighted to be able to tell you about another really exciting development. Our Exams Officer, Mrs Riley-Fox, has launched an initiative with a small group of girls who are interested in equestrian sports, competing locally against other schools in disciplines such as Show Jumping. She has managed to secure some sponsorship for their membership and is working with parents to organise lessons and training sessions in the hope that the girls will be competition-ready for next Spring. The girls will be representing our school in competitions and will proudly display their BHS colours and numnahs when competing...(another word I had to Google to find out what it was!). The girls involved are Isabella Thompson, Anna Donaldson, Libby Loughlin and Katie Grainger – we look forward to some fantastic pictures and stories to come!

Girls' Active Leadership Day

Miss Temple writes:

Last Friday we attended a 'Girls Active: Stepping up for Change' leadership day at Archbishop Holgate School in York. This a project run by Youth Sport Trust with the aim of getting more girls active. The day started with a welcome and inspirational talk from Jenna

Downing - world inline skating champion. After this the girls spent the day working with various members of staff from Youth Sport Trust to develop a better understanding of the barriers girls face when taking part in sport. They also got the opportunity to design their own marketing campaign to get more girls active. Whilst this was happening, all the teachers received separate training about how we can support the Girls Active Ambassadors to implement their ideas in school. The day finished with each group of students presenting their campaign to get girls active to all the YST staff and other students. Our students came up with a fantastic slogan for their campaign "Be Proud, Be Brave, Be You!" The girls had a fantastic and inspiring day, showing excellent leadership skills throughout. They were presented with their leadership badges in assembly this week and I look forward to seeing them put their ideas into practice in school. See Facebook for photos.

Sports Update

Miss Temple writes:

On Tuesday our **Year 7 and Year 9 girls' football teams** were in action away at Stokesley School. The girls were looking to build on their fantastic start to the year and continue their undefeated run. Despite both games being extremely close, with excellent football being played from both schools, we managed to come away winners in both games! The Year 9s won 3-2 in a very physical game. Well done to Jess Pattison for being awarded Woman Of The Match. The Year 7s won 4-3 in a game which saw some outstanding goals being scored. Well done to Charlotte Lewis who was awarded the WOTM award. I was extremely impressed with all the girls tonight; they came up against some very strong players but worked incredibly hard for each other and got the results they deserved!

On Wednesday we attended the **Year 7 sports hall athletics competition at Richmond School**. The students competed in a range of indoor track and field events to earn points for their team. We had a fantastic afternoon and the students showed excellent team spirit, cheering and encouraging each other in their events. We have come home laden with silverware after both the boys and girls teams finished in second place. Well done to all involved!

Please keep checking Facebook for pictures of these events.

Bedale Creative Workshops

Miss Allsop writes:

A massive well done to Emma, Holly, Will and Sam for promoting the Bedale Creative Workshop cause last weekend at Leeming Bar Co-Op by talking to the locals about the fundraiser. It was a pleasure to take students who had volunteered their time to ensure Co-Op card holders pledged their 1% to our cause. We were thrilled to see last year's causes such as the Community Hub and the Cricket Club who received their cheques just short of £8000! In total all Co-Op members raised £21,500 which was split between local causes. We thank the Co-Op and the whole community for supporting these causes this year. We feel really privileged to be part of this and excited for our future creative workshops which will offer something for the whole community to be part of.

Homework Support Evening for Year 7 Parents

Thank you to all the parents and students who attended this event last night. We held the event in response to the Yr 7 Parent Questionnaire where a number of parents expressed concern about the amount of Homework that was being set for Year 7 students. I started by speaking about why we value homework, and linked this to the need for the early development of independent learning skills that will help to ensure students are well-equipped for the rigour of ever more challenging GCSEs. Mrs Knight then talked about the support streams available in school and Mr Gill recapped on how to use the Show My Homework app.

But the main point of the evening was to hear from parents, to listen to concerns and to discuss ideas that could help to give more assurance around the purpose of Homework and the processes around setting it and feeding back on work. We heard some really useful ideas, and some tough messages that it was important for us to listen to. I stand by the position that if students are helped to be really organised, and complete HW tasks on the day it is set, it is a reasonable workload that is well managed by the vast majority of students. That said, there were a number of really good suggestions and improvements from parents that we will now be looking at, covering a range of aspects such as how we feedback on homework, clarity of instructions and the type of task that is being set, amongst other things. My next step is to share feedback with staff, and to agree some actions moving forward that will hopefully lead to positive changes where needed.

Christmas Showcase

Miss Cropper writes:

It is that time of the year again when the Drama and Music department present the Christmas Showcase (Wednesday 18th December). Please join us from 6.30-8pm for mince pies and a combination of musical and dramatic performances from students across the school. Please purchase your tickets via ParentPay to avoid disappointment. Tickets are £3 per adult and children under the age of 16 go free. All children must be accompanied by an adult. No tickets will be issued and a checklist will be on the door. Any remaining tickets will be available for purchase on the evening. We look forward to an evening of fabulous entertainment from students across all year groups! Tickets are non-refundable.

Year 7 Parent Evening

Please remind your son/daughter in Year 7 to ensure that they make appointments with all their teachers for this event. Parent Evening begins at 4pm on Tuesday 11th December and we look forward to seeing you there. We also ask all parents to complete a questionnaire on arrival that helps to inform us over what is going well and any concerns that we need to respond to.

Attendance

School has been hit hard by a second really nasty virus over the last week or so. Attached to this week's email is a copy of a letter that is recommended for schools to send out to parents, reminding them and students of how we can aim to reduce the spread of infections, germs, viruses through basic hygiene routines. We hope to see students recovering quickly as we pass through the next few days, and look forward to seeing attendance pick up again next week.

Congratulations to Mrs Freeman!

I'd like to pass on a huge well done to Mrs Freeman in the Pastoral Support Team. She has successfully secured a place on a teacher training course for September 2020 when she will begin to train as a Maths teacher with the Yorkshire Teaching Schools Alliance. She is absolutely the sort of person we need to come into the profession and I have every confidence that she will become a great teacher. In the meantime, we will treasure the time that she has left with us!

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'T Kelly', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Mr T Kelly
Headteacher