



Term 2a Newsletter 2019/20

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you have had a restful break over the Christmas period and that students are returning to school refreshed and ready for learning. We ended the first term with a collection for ArcLight and we were able to give this important charity a significant amount of food and other donations just prior to Christmas, along with a cheque for £978.87 from money raised in the last week of term. They were delighted with the support that the school community had given them at this time of the year and asked me to pass on their thanks to you all.

Staffing Update

Mr Hickinson was appointed to the role of Behaviour Manager before the Christmas holidays and will support the work of the Pastoral and House teams moving forward.

Ms Frame has joined us this term to teach History and Geography across different year groups.

Year 9 Options

Our Year 9 options process starts this term with students being issued with their options booklets followed by our Options Evening which is taking place on Thursday 16 January between 6pm and 7.30pm. There will be two talks on the night in the Vaudeville hall to explain the options process and booklets. Parents and Carers will also be able to talk to the Heads of Departments about the subjects on offer. The final deadline for all options forms to be returned to form tutors is Friday 24 January.

Post 16 Taster Days

All of Year 11 have had the opportunity to sign up for Taster Days at the various post 16 institutions across York. The majority of students have signed up to a Taster Day, with over 130 engaging with our own Sixth Form Taster Day on Thursday 16 January. Please ensure that you are aware which taster day your child is attending, especially if this involves attending York College on Tuesday 14 January so that you are aware of where your child will be. Those attending our Sixth Form Taster Day will receive a letter with their timetable for the day. If they are attending taster sessions elsewhere they should have had contact to confirm their choices, please contact the relevant institution directly if you don't have this. Students not attending a taster on Thursday 16 January will be expected to be in school, Miss Richardson has planned a programme of sessions for them to follow.

Immediately following the taster days students in Year 11 will need to make their Post 16 choices and submit applications to their preferred institution. The deadlines for these vary, please check websites for details. Our deadline for applications for Joseph Rowntree Sixth Form is 31 January – there will be application forms available on the taster day and from Mr Coleman all through the month of January.

HEADTEACHER: Mr David Hewitt, BA (Hons), NPQH

DEPUTY HEAD: Mr A Haigh, BSc (Hons)

DEPUTY HEAD: Ms C Mann, BA (Hons)

“Working together to achieve success”

School Production – ‘The Addams Family’

One of our main extracurricular activities this half term will be the Vaudeville Production of 'The Addams Family'. This involves a large amount of the school community, both students and staff, and we are very grateful for all the hard work that is being put in to this show. The show runs from 11-13 February, with a primary school matinee on 10 February. Ticket information will be available shortly on our website and will also be sent home to all families.

Parent/Carer Evenings

We have had two Parent/Carer Evenings (Year 7 and Year 9) using the new online booking system. Feedback about the new system has been very positive and we will take into account the suggestions from parents and carers about how we could further improve the system going forward. You will receive information about this system in advance of each parent/carers evening which will allow you to log on and make appointments. Please stick to the timings of your appointments as these are busy evenings and members of staff often have a lot of people to see. Members of the Senior Leadership Team will be available if you require further information.

To help gather further views of parents and carers we will be handing out questionnaires at Parent/Carer evenings. Please take the time to complete these and return them before you leave. Your views on the school are important to us and will help us identify areas to improve.

Catering

Please note that a 3% uplift to the school meal price list has been approved with immediate effect, to cover both annual staffing cost increases for the Catering Contractor (ABM) in line with the Foundation Living Wage, but also food price inflation. The main meal option remains fixed at £2.40 as it has been for the last 3 years. The School keeps costs under review and this price increase has been agreed for the next 12 months. The School is also working closely with ABM to implement a replacement of plastics and polystyrene waste, moving to sustainable, compostable materials. Whilst this has also had a cost impact, the School has chosen to pay directly for this environmentally friendly switch and not to pass these additional costs on to student and staff customers.

Inclement Weather

After a mild start to the winter there is potential for heavy snowfall over the next few months. We will always strive to keep school open to all students but there may be occasions when extreme conditions mean that we have to make the decision to close the school to students. If the decision to shut the school is made we will communicate this to parents/carers via the school website and Twitter feed. Local Radio stations will also have up to date information about school closures around the city.

Uniform

We have been really pleased with the support that parents and carers have given us as we have tightened up our expectations of uniform at the start of this academic year. We will continue to have high expectations of uniform and ask that you do a quick check of uniform and jewellery before your child leaves home in the morning. If you are buying new uniform and are unsure if it will meet our expectations please contact your child's House Team to check before you buy.

A reminder that trousers should be formal black trousers, fitted and not elasticated or lycra based where they cling to the leg. Trousers should also not be cropped, and should reach below the ankle, and socks should be black ankle socks, not trainer style socks.

Attendance

We continue in our drive to have excellent levels of attendance and punctuality. Attending and taking part in learning is fundamental to making sure that our young people become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. Lost days at school also result in lost examination grades. It is easy to think that an occasional missed day from school does not really matter, but, all missed days do count and for Year 11 students could have a direct impact on grades.

The law states that students must be here every school day of the academic year. The only exception to this is if they are too ill to come in, or where permission has been granted in exceptional circumstances from the Headteacher. Where a student's attendance falls below 90%, they are classed as a 'persistent absentee' and we are required to report on this to the local authority. Our school target is for every student to have above 96% attendance, to ensure that they have the best possible chances of success.

Last half term, we ran our 100% attendance reward incentive, and this will run again this half term, giving each student a fresh chance to take part. It was fantastic to be able to celebrate with our students during a range of pop up rewards throughout the term and we are delighted to be taking the winners of the final prize draw for a trip out of school for their chosen reward, including a special afternoon tea, time practicing skills on a ski slope, or testing their ability to solve clues in an escape room. Well done!

Cycling

Please ensure that if your child cycles to school they bring a lock with them to secure their bikes in the provided storage areas. We have recently had reports of bikes going missing during the school day but further investigation revealed that these bikes were not locked up.

Access to School grounds at the end of the day

Further to my letter at the end of term we have put new signs up to remind parents/carers to only pick up students in the school grounds after 3.30pm. Please support us by not arriving before this time.

Please see the attached sheet which has the key dates for this half term on it. If you require any further information please contact school.

Thank you for your continued support for the work of the school.

Regards



Dave Hewitt
Headteacher

Key Dates - Term 2 2019/20

Thursday 16 th January	Year 9 Options Evening
Friday 17 th January	Year 11 Results Assembly
Thursday 30 th January	Year 11 Parent / Carer Evening
Thursday 6 th February	Year 12 Parent / Carer Evening
Monday 10 th February	Governors T&L Committee Meeting
Monday 10 th - 13 th February	School Production 'The Addams Family'
Monday 24 th February	Governors SCC Committee Meeting
Monday 2 nd March	Governors FGB Meeting
Thursday 5 th March	Year 11 Revision Evening
Thursday 5 th March	Year 11 viewing of RSC Macbeth
Thursday 26 th March	Year 10 Parent / Carer Evening
Thursday 26 th March	Wiltshire Afternoon Tea
Monday 30 th March	Governors FSR Committee Meeting
Thursday 2 nd April	Easter Concert