

22 December 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

### **End of Term Newsletter – December 2017**

I write at the end of another busy term for students and staff, which was rounded off with a fantastic number of fundraising events organised by Student Voice, BTEC Business students, Scouts and VMGs to support a number of local and national charities. We recently totalled the money raised in various ways for the Teenage Cancer Trust, a fantastic £1200 through our 'Georgina Day', sponsored silence and more. The Redcar Area Food Bank will be coming in today, to join us during the whole school Christmas Assembly, to collect a fantastic number of VMG hampers of donations to support families in need at Christmas and beyond. Students will also be donating during our Christmas Jumper Day today too. Thank you for your support and encouragement to your sons and daughters, as we aim to provide numerous opportunities for them to value the importance of volunteering, charity and community. They are always brilliant at rising to the challenge!

I give some information and news below that I hope will be helpful.

#### **End of Term/Start of Term**

Term ends for students at 2.30pm on Friday 22 December 2017.

Term resumes on Monday 8 January 2018 at 8.20am.

For all our term dates, including provisional ones for 2018-2019 please see our website here:

<http://www.bydales.outwood.com/term-dates>

#### **After-School Enrichment from January 2018**

Booklets giving details of the extensive after-school activities we will be running from January will go home via students on Monday 8 January. The booklet includes where necessary, how to sign-up. This will be uploaded, as usual, to our website shortly here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/enrichment-activities>

#### **Year 8 Guided Pathways Evening, 11 January 6pm**

There will be a Guided Pathways Evening for students and parents in Year 8, as we start to support with their moving into Year 9 and on to GCSE/BTEC courses, following Graduation in the Summer. This will be held on Thursday 11 January at 6pm, and it is clearly important that all Year 8 students and parents can make the event if at all possible please.

#### **Reading Strategy Presentation to Parents, 15 January 6pm**

Thank you to all our parents for their support, as we encourage all students, regardless of year group, to aim to read a novel for a minimum of 20 minutes a day. Many students already regularly exceed this, but we have found in the past that students can get out of the habit of 'reading for pleasure', despite being fantastic at this when at primary school. There are obvious links to the amount of reading, and academic success, due to the increase in vocabulary, articulacy, spelling accuracy and the ability to read quickly and interpret questions. Parents are requested to 'sign off' Reading Logbooks that all students have, to support us in raising reading expectation. We have many rewards and ways of tracking through our use of 'Accelerated Reader' in lower school. There is more about this on our news item here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/blog/news/2179> We would like to present to parents on Monday 15 January at 6pm if you could make the event, and a letter will come out in the new year with more details.

#### **Outwood Academy Bydales**

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### **Years 9-11 Mock Examinations, 8 – 19 January**

We have two weeks of GCSE/BTEC/Cambridge Nationals Mock examinations during the first two weeks back after Christmas, ie Monday 8 – Friday 19 January, for students in Years 9, 10 and 11. These will be held in the Sports Hall, in the same conditions as the Summer GCSEs, to ensure students are familiar and have overcome any concerns about the arrangements. The timetable has already been issued to students earlier in the term, giving when each exam is, but there is a copy on our website here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/praising-stars> You will appreciate the amount of time teachers will spend marking and providing feedback following these assessments, and the need for us all to maximise the opportunity for students to identify genuine areas of weakness, rather than just confirm a lack of revision. Your support ensuring students revise (and therefore also reduce revision demands in the Summer) will be greatly appreciated as ever.

### **The Wizard of Oz Drama Production, 6-8 February 2018**

Students have been working hard over the last term, ably supported by Mrs Thompson, Mrs Trenholm, Mrs Smith and many other staff, preparing for our annual whole school drama production. As you will be aware, it will be The Wizard of Oz this time, and it is scheduled for the 6, 7 and 8 February 2018, so do keep a space in your diary. If you are able to come along, I have no doubt you will be astounded by the talent of the cast and crew.

### **GCSE Results 2017, an update**

As you may be aware, the Year 11 Leavers of 2017 achieved record results for the third year in a row, supported as ever by parents and dedicated teachers and support staff. In a DfE checking exercise in October, ahead of the publication of the School Performance Tables in January, it appears students have performed extremely well compared to the 149 schools within the North East of England. The provisional tables show that with 75% of 2017 students achieving 5+ (broadly equivalent to an old 'B' at GCSE) in both English and mathematics, this is top in the North East. For Progress students make from primary school, at +0.68, we are second in the North East, as we are too for Attainment. An amazing 85% achieved a 4 or above in English and maths (broadly equivalent to an old 'C') with 90% separately at 4+ in both English and maths. For more information see our website page here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/ofsted> This fantastic achievement has come from hard work of students, staff and parents alike, thank you!

### **Lunchtime Debts**

As you will be aware, the building and catering is run under a PFI contract, from when the school was built, and therefore is not under my direct control. When I first arrived, students were not able to eat a meal if they did not have enough money on their ParentPay account, or did not have money with them to load onto the machines. I requested that this was altered to allow a slight overdraft to ensure everyone could eat, particularly as mistakes can occasionally be made remembering money. However, more recently, some students are not using this in the spirit to which was originally set up, such that Carillion have asked I review this and they may decide to withdraw the facility. It is in everyone's interest that students do not go overdrawn except in rare circumstances, and I ask for your support in this, as well as clearing any deficits immediately, so the previous 'status quo' can remain.

### **PE - Cross Country January**

Reminder from Mrs Hill, Head of PE that all classes are on X-Country for first two weeks in January. Please can parents ensure that students have warm base layers, football boots (for grip on the field), water and a towel for drying off afterwards! Plain hats and gloves are also allowed.

### **BTEC Business students - Cake Bake Sale**

Students in BTEC Business have been working on their business models, looking at marketing, costings, profit margins and much more. As part of this they were keen to put their skills to the test, to raise money for Redcar Area Food Bank. The total from their sales raised, £221, is just in as this newsletter goes to press. Students had a budget of one pound each which they pooled together in teams to make cakes and biscuits as cheaply as they possibly could. They then sold their cakes and biscuits for between 20p and 50p each, so this total raised is a massive achievement! Well done all! Photos will be posted as a news item on our website, over the coming days.

### **Praising Stars 2 and 3**

The second Praising Stars reports of the academic year, also known as PS2, are being issued to students today. The envelope also contained a cover letter explaining the codes on the report. We respectfully ask for a prompt return of the reply slips so we can then check all reports have made it home. If you have not received the report, please contact your child's Learning Manager via email addresses here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/contact> under 'Key Staff Contacts'. It is helpful if parents can also regularly remind students of the assessment windows for each of the six weekly assessment cycles, to ensure revision is appropriately focused. The Praising Stars assessment calendar is always on our website here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/praising-stars>

### **No Aerosols**

Just a reminder, particularly to parents of students who have joined us this academic year, that absolutely no aerosols (including deodorant and body sprays) are allowed onto the academy site. The carrying and use of aerosols is strictly forbidden, and would result in a C4 at least, and a C5 day in Consequences for repeat offenders. Students who wish to use a deodorant should purchase a roll-on variety, for use following a PE lesson or Enrichment session for example. This is because we have a number of students with severe asthma who are so allergic to the additives in aerosol sprays, that entering a room sometime afterwards, where aerosols have been used, leads to hospitalization. Students have been excellent over the years at understanding this.

### **Uniform Expectations**

A number of students appear to be wearing non-Outwood trousers, no doubt without the knowledge of their parents. It would be unfortunate if we needed to check this more carefully in the New Year, as the vast majority continue to wear our uniform with pride, are smart and are a credit to themselves. Interpretations of what constitutes a school trouser is an unnecessary distraction for everyone, hence for three years we insist on the correct trousers or a C4 will be issued and correct trousers lent for the day. Thank you to parents for your support looking into this over Christmas and addressing with your sons/daughters ready for the January start if necessary. Other very rare issues, for reference are as follows. Please can students not wear 'designer' belt buckles, advertising brands etc. Belt buckles should be plain, and the belt itself black, otherwise a C4 will be issued and an alternative belt borrowed. Students need to be careful about skirt length, particularly if it is some time since purchase with considerable height changes in the meantime. As ever, make-up should not be worn, unless concealer is absolutely necessary. Any make-up that can be seen is clearly not discrete either, in which case wipes will be offered and a C4 issued. School shoes continue to be smart and appropriate, and thank you for your support with this. A reminder that boots, of any description, are not permitted. Parents can always ask for guidance before purchase, if there is any doubt, and several have done so via direct message on social media, which is appreciated. There are details as ever on our website here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/uniform>

### **Road Safety and Parental Parking**

Thank you for respecting my wishes to park in the designated parking bays on the school site, rather than on double yellow lines or elsewhere, and taking care when pulling out after collecting your children. Please do

park to collect students, rather than pulling out into the queue and then stopping suddenly to pick up children, which is then causing frustration to other drivers. Please do not park on Churchill Drive, which is no entry, except for resident access, as this makes the crossing which we already staff, even more unsafe where drivers use the road as an illegal cut through. Likewise, parking on the private path/cycle way opposite the school, is also unsafe and creates unnecessary frustration for residents as their lawns get damaged. This has not been an issue for some time, but I thought it timely to thank parents for their support.

### Letters

We continue to send all generic letters home via students, although it is appreciated some do not always survive the journey in the bottom of school bags. Letters are routinely posted on our website and can be accessed via Information > Letters To Parent on our website or by using this link: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/letters-to-parents>

### Bydales Social Media

If you would like to have very frequent updates about what is going on in school day-by-day, you could follow the school on Twitter using @OutwoodBydales or 'like' our Facebook page called 'Outwood Academy Bydales'. Each day we post reminders, copies of letters sent home and perhaps most importantly celebrate the successes of students and staff, which proves popular and gives a flavour of school life here at Bydales. Do remember to 'like' posts occasionally (or often!) to ensure our posts appear towards the top of your social media newsfeeds.

### Year 11 Revision Run Streak Challenge

In a moment of hubris, I challenged Y11 to revise for one hour every day, starting from my assembly to them in September, in return for myself running 4 miles a day. The idea being I could then reflect and relate to the challenges of motivating myself in all weathers and when tired, much as they have to when summoning the energy to revise after a busy school day too. I produced a Revision Timetable to help them and there is more information here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/blog/news/2221> I have managed it, and many Year 11s tell me they have too. I post each night on our social media so students can hold me to my word!

### Goodbyes

Finally, at the end of this term we say goodbye to four colleagues. Mrs Wing our Librarian leaves us to begin her maternity leave. Mr Oseland, who has been supporting and teaching in the Music Department with Mrs Trenholm, leaves to begin his second placement in another academy within Outwood. Mr Upex, becomes a Director of Maths supporting across two of our other Teesside academies, but will continue to teach his Year 11 class alongside Mrs Charlton who returns as our new Head of Maths. Finally, after many fine years of service to Bydales, Mr Burton (and his wife) leave for pastures new in New Zealand. It is a fantastic opportunity for such a talented teacher and Head of Technology, and we wish him well. He will no doubt continue to make a huge difference to those he teaches in NZ. Mrs Brown joins us as Head of Technology in January.

I wish you and your families a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Wappat  
Principal