



Tadcaster Grammar school

'A Culture of Excellence'

NEWSLETTER

February 2019

From the Head

Dear Parents and Students,
 As always, the school has been an incredibly busy place since we began 2019. I have been amazed by how much has been packed into this half term! The content of this newsletter is a stunning reflection of that. As we are now just over half way through the school year, I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the commitments we make to all students as part of our 'culture of excellence'.

We aspire that every student will:

- Feel happy, safe and included
- Be known well, valued and heard
- Receive consistently excellent teaching
- Be given opportunities to grow academically, personally and culturally

In return we expect all students to:

- Behave well
- Show respect for others and our environment
- Be committed to their education
- Develop habits of excellence

As Head, my job is to ensure that we deliver on these each and every day. At times, this presents huge challenges and we are not complacent nor are we conceited enough to think that we are always perfect. We do, however, make every effort to continually evaluate and review the service we provide, with the aim of getting better all the time. Our students in Year 11 and Year 13 are currently preparing for the external examinations; which actually begin in only nine school weeks. I do wish them well in these challenging weeks ahead and wish to reassure them that hard work really does pay off.

Our Sixth Form continues to be a hugely important part of Tadcaster Grammar School, with our older students being absolute assets. They contribute hugely to our community. Amongst many things, they mentor, act as reading buddies, support younger students with their mathematics and are generally superb role models in the way they conduct themselves around school. The Student Leadership Team are a very active group and I am delighted that opportunities are being offered to students in Years 7 and 8 this year. From the most recent update, our students also seem to be incredibly successful in managing their futures, judging by the impressive array of offers they are receiving from Universities and employers!

I am glad to report that the future of the Sixth Form looks bright here, judging by the large number of excellent applications we have again received in recent weeks, to join us in September 2019. I believe that this is a really special place and I want as many of our students as possible to continue to be part of it post 16.

This term our assemblies have included some very important messages. The first round, being led by our very active Eco-Schools Group, expressed some harsh but powerful messages about our environment, including the need to carefully discard rubbish. The second round, entitled '100% Attendance Matters', provided evidence for the need to aspire to 100% Attendance to ensure the best of everything, in terms of opportunities, for our young people. Year 7 also celebrated success in the Accelerated Reader Programme. The positive impact of reading for all, cannot be underestimated. I would therefore be grateful if parents could provide additional support around these messages at home.

Finally, as the days are becoming longer and the daffodils are coming into bloom, I would like to wish you all a very good half term break.



Wendy Wilson
Head of School

In Brief

Tad Gram Talks

This is the first / pilot episode of the new podcast Tad Gram Talks for the school...[read more>>](#)

Key Stage 4 One Stop Shop

Do you hear the cry "I DON'T KNOW HOW TO REVISE"?...[read more>>](#)



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The STAR
 MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

web.starmat.uk

Shape Your Future

On Tuesday evening, in partnership with Tadcaster and Rural Community Interest Company, we had over fifty employers, along with key regional partners in Higher and Further Education at our annual Careers Fair.

The evening is a great opportunity to engage our young people with the business community and demonstrate local labour market opportunities.

Small business and self employment are big in York and North Yorkshire, 16% of the working population is self employed and this is forecast to rise. Are you a budding entrepreneur?

Thinking about what qualifications are needed for different jobs is an essential part of careers research. Career goals can be reached by different routes depending on your career choice.

The job market is always changing.

Looking ahead can help students to prepare for potential career changes and understand the knowledge and skills that will continue to be useful.

During the evening seminars were run addressing topics on,

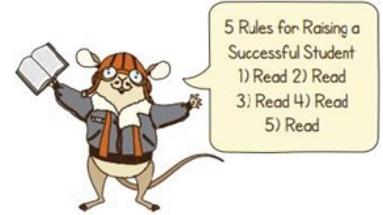
- > Effective Communication Skills
- > What skills do employers look for when recruiting?
- > Skills gaps in the local area.

The evening, as always, was a huge success and was attended by students from Years 9 through to 13.



Accelerated Reader : The Story So Far

All students in Year 7 take part in the Accelerated Reader Scheme as part of their English lessons. At the beginning of the school year the students sit a STAR Assessment. This is an online assessment which determines the student's reading age and suggests a book level 'zone' from which to choose titles.



The student then reads a book, of their choice, from within the suggested zone. There are thousands of book titles with quizzes available. The student takes an online quiz on the said book, the results of which they see immediately.

On the 7th February we held an assembly for the Year 7 students to celebrate their progress with regards to the Scheme. As of the end of January, students in Year 7 had taken 1307 quizzes, passing 942 of them. Naturally the number of quizzes taken by individual students varied, but we are pleased to say that 87% of the students had taken at least one quiz during the Autumn Term. The student who had passed the most quizzes and the student who had the most 100% passes both received a prize. The software records the number of words read across all the books for which a quiz has been taken and passed. At the end of January Year 7, as a whole, had read **38,858,111 words**, with five students having read over a million words each, these students all received prizes.

The STAR Assessment is repeated four times throughout the academic year so that English teachers can monitor the progress of each student. We celebrated the fact that many of the students had increased their reading age during the Autumn Term over and above their expected growth rate, and the student who had made the most progress received a prize. Naturally all the prizes given out were books!

The assembly served not only to encourage the students to read more and take more quizzes – for more prizes will be available at the end of the year, but also encouraged the teachers. Whilst the class with the most read words merrily congratulated themselves, other English teachers rallied their students to increase their reading, because at the end of the school year, the teacher also receives a prize!

The students were reminded of the importance of reading, not only to aid their academic studies but also their wellbeing. As a school we recommend that students read for at least 25 minutes daily. Reading, for pleasure, is a great way to relax, to push away the worries of the day, the concerns of social media, and to simply escape into a good book, albeit for a short period of time.

For further information on the importance of reading please take a look at the Reading Agency website with regard to Reading Facts - <https://readingagency.org.uk/about/impact/002-reading-facts-1/>



Don't forget you can browse through the titles available in the school library from the comfort of your own home by clicking on the Oliver link on the school website.
Happy Reading.



Tadcaster Grammar School
'A Culture of Excellence'



TGS are working with the charity Future First to build a school alumni, a network of past students. We would like to invite all Y11 and Y13 students to join.
what is the alumni about and reasons why you should sign up...[more info>>](#)

Please do stay in touch. Register at:

When 90% is Not Enough

attendance
MATTERS

If you were awarded 90% in a test or an examination you would be celebrating this result - however when it comes to a school attendance of 90% or below - it is a real concern. In fact, once a student's attendance falls below 90% they are classed as a persistent absentee.

Excellent attendance is the key to student success. It is widely known that there is a direct link between student attendance and student outcomes, especially in final examinations. We want all students to aim for significantly above the 90% threshold to ensure the best outcomes. As a school, we begin to monitor student attendance very closely when it drops below 92%.

With this in mind, can we please remind parents that we cannot authorise holidays in term time. We also ask that if your son or daughter is absent from school, you ring the school and leave a message for our Attendance Officer, stating the reason for the absence and when you hope they will return.

Finally, our advice about attendance to parents is simple - we understand that students do experience ill health, but do encourage your child to return to school as soon as they can after an illness. If you have to book medical appointments during the school day, please try to ensure your child attends school for part of the day. If you begin to have concerns about your child's attendance and require support, please contact the school as soon as possible so that we can put some support in place.

Above all, we want to support all students to have aspirational attendance targets of above 97%.

A Sign of Moving Forward

Our distinctive school uniform is part of our identity and it is a pleasure to see students taking pride in wearing it well. We make no apologies for having exceptionally high standards in this area and appreciate the continued support from home in ensuring our students are always well presented.

We are excited to be able to inform you about a change to our school uniform. After significant consultation and detailed research by our student community, most notably our Equality and Diversity Group, we are updating our uniform, so that it will become gender neutral. This means students, both female and male, will be issued with a list of compulsory and non-compulsory uniform items to wear. The new uniform will be compulsory for our in-coming Year 7 only. Years 8 to 11 can choose to wear the new uniform from September 2019. As a school, we thought long and hard about the introduction of the new uniform. The decision was made to make this

change non-compulsory for Years 8 to 11, to reflect our understanding that the purchase of school uniform is very costly for families. However if your child would like to start wearing the new uniform in September 2019 they can do. Our only stipulation is that students in Years 8 to 11 must wear either the new uniform or the old one. There cannot be a mixture of the two uniforms. Chalks School Shop will continue to be our sole supplier and have liaised with us to provide the most competitive price. They will be providing a new price list for March 1st. The school's Uniform and Appearance Statement is available on the school website alongside uniform lists and images of our new uniform for you to view ...[read more>>](#)



Social Networking Safety

Social networks are a great way to stay connected with others, but you should be wary about how much personal information you post. **Protect your reputation on social networks.**

Below are just a handful of Social Media sites to be aware of -

 **Ask.fm** is a global social networking site where users create profiles and can send each other questions. It was once a form of anonymous social media that encouraged questions to be submitted anonymously.

 **Grindr** is a geosocial networking and online dating application geared towards gay, bi, trans, and queer people.

 **Houseparty** is a social networking service that enables group video chatting through mobile and desktop apps. Users receive a notification when friends are online and available to group video chat.

 **Instagram** is a photo and video-sharing social networking service owned by Facebook, Inc.

 An online game where users interact with other online players. This has been in the news a lot for being used by men to target children.

 **Omegle** is a chat site that puts two strangers together in their choice of a text chat or a video chat room. Being anonymous can be very attractive to teens!

 **Tik Tok** is the new name for the recently rebranded Musical.ly app

 **Meow Chat** is a social network that allows you to have chats with strangers in a public chat room, with the option for them to move into a private conversation.

 **Tumblr** is like a cross between a blog and twitter. It's a streaming scrapbook of text, photos, videos and audio clips.

 **Snapchat** is a messaging app that lets users put a time limit on the pictures and videos they send before they disappear, but they can be quickly captured.

Remember - **Once posted, always posted:**

Exam Preparation-Be Ready

There are nine School weeks, including this week, until the Exams start on **13th May 2019!!**

Here are nine things students could be doing; and always remember it's the small extras that add up and make all the difference to help improve performance.

The recommended revision time equates to 3-5 hours revision per day, with weekends off!

1. Pick up a revision planner and use time well.
2. Attend school every day and if you are struggling, speak to a teacher or other member of staff.
3. Attend some extra lunchtime and/ or after school sessions.
4. Ask for more feedback from teachers to make sure you are "getting it" and improving!
5. Record subject/target areas and stick to them.
6. Visit the '[KS4 One Stop Shop](#)' on the School website and use the Subject tabs for advice.
7. Visit useful Revision websites and use existing revision notes! [Getrevising.com](#)
8. Use time well in school- especially Life Skills lessons-Progress Logs, S15 EVERY Lunch time and Thursdays after school in the ILC
9. Take regular breaks from revision and have things to look forward to.

There are daily Extra Sessions available for Students at Lunch time and After School.

KS4
INDEPENDENT
S • T • U • D • Y



Every Thursday
3.15pm – 4.30pm

ILC

Practical Based Learning

Teaching students with disabilities is highly underrated. In fact, colleagues and I often brag that our students are the coolest kids in school, a sort of 'best kept secret' of the trade (except we've been shouting it from the rooftops for a while).

Here at TGS we have a fantastic group of staff who work alongside students with varying needs. The students have been following an out and about programme through Practical Learning and Life Skills. The town's project is aimed at building practical and social skills, comparing cities, towns and villages and looking at what they offer the community. The students observe the surroundings and amenities. They learn about road safety- how to cross the road safely. They learn about handling money and communication skills, where they visit a shop with a list of groceries to buy. Public transport can be very challenging for students who are anxious; they are encouraged to overcome this with trips on buses to various places. All these practical skills lead to more school-based work; where the students are going on to build their own model town.

At Tadcaster, we use the holistic approach, holistic education seeks to help students grow and develop in all dimensions; emotional, psychological, creative, social, imaginative, physical, intuitive, and spiritual. Holistic treatment simply means treating the entire person, which is what we aim to do. Building self-esteem in a student then leads to positive outcomes to learning. The students begin to feel confident when crossing the road, using public transport and going into a shop and confidently buying something.

Practical (active) learning. Active learning is consistent with other theories of learning – learning should be relevant and situated within a meaningful context. This idea was developed by the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) and it led to inquiry-based and discovery learning models. The main idea here is that we learn best when we can see the usefulness of what we learn and connect it to the real world.

Active learning uses the constructivist's method. Constructivist teaching is based on the belief that learning occurs as learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction as opposed to passively receiving information.

In other words – to actively take part not just sit and listen or watch.....[read more >>](#)



Sports Update

Girls Football

Girls from Year 7 and 8 travelled to Whitby to play Caedmon School in the County Cup on Tuesday 5th February 2019. After a really positive start scoring an early goal, the girls braved some really cold and windy conditions but unfortunately lost out 4-2. Isabella Devereux scoring the pick of the goals; keeping her nerve then picking out the top corner from 20 yards after a fantastic solo run.

Year 8 Boys Football

The boys have had a fantastic season already, losing just one game all year and reaching the Last 32 of the English School National Cup, equalling the schools record in this competition. Unfortunately, the boys were beaten by a strong South Hunsley team 3-2. Adam Clarkson captained the side and led by example, showing some sublime skill scoring into the top corner from 30 yards. The team have shown great resilience throughout the course of the season, beating some challenging opposition in St. John Fisher and St. Aidan's School respectively. Most recently, they have progressed to the Semi-Finals of the North Yorkshire County Cup after beating Northallerton School 3-0 on Wednesday 13th February 2019. They will play Selby School at home in the Semi-Finals.



Year 7 and 8 Girls Football team



Year 8 Boys Football Team

U14 Basketball Team

Congratulations to the U14 basketball team who have been crowned York + District basketball champions after a 70-47 win over Bootham School. The team also finished the season unbeaten.



U14 Basketball Team

Trampolining

Year 7 Student Emily Lock has been selected for the England trampolining squad for her age group. Emily will attend weekend training sessions in Liverpool and training camps at Lilleshall with the hope that she will represent her country at forthcoming Championships.

Emily is congratulated by Mrs Wilson



Physical Activity Primes the Brain for Learning.

Your child can experience many benefits, physically, mentally and emotionally, as a direct result of their participation in some form of PE, and a higher level of participation can lead to greater rewards.

Physical activity produces endorphins (chemicals in the brain) that regulate mood, pleasure, and pain. An elevated mood can contribute to an "I can do it" attitude which goes a long way as students approach new tasks as challenges, not obstacles.

Every child is entitled to a rich, broad and balanced curriculum, where physical education is a critical element. Physical Education is about what takes place in school curriculum timetabled time and which is delivered to all pupils.

Students in Year 11 follow a programme of activities in their Physical Education lessons on Thursday afternoons at a variety of local sports facilities out of school. These are, Tadcaster Swimming Pool, Tadcaster Sports Centre and The David Lloyd Health Club in York. The feedback from the students indicates that they really enjoy the opportunity as it introduces them to new sporting activities, it helps improve their health and fitness and it provides a pathway for them to see the type of facilities available for them to join in the community....[read more>>](#)



Year 7 Newcastle United FC Pro-Match Coaching Experience

48 Year 7 students had the opportunity to visit St James' Park and experience a Premiership football match - Newcastle United v Manchester City. Prior to this, the students took part in a football coaching session led by the Newcastle United Academy staff. Despite a cold night, the students had a fantastic time and saw some of the best footballers in the world on show. It was a great game with Newcastle United beating the defending champions, Manchester City, 2-1.



Stammer Awareness



Head Student Scott Kemp was invited by Radio York to speak about Stammer Awareness. Scott first realised he had a stammer when he was about 7 years old. He struggled getting little words and letters out as smoothly as he wanted to. He would avoid having to say certain words; especially in primary school Scott would avoid answering his name during registration as he knew he couldn't say it.

Scott had it easier than most people as he was lucky enough to attend a stammer support clinic in Leeds. Scott started going to see a therapist who taught him how to slow his breathing down and speak slower. He saw different speech therapists who built on each other. Scott learnt how to speak in front of people, which is what Scott does now. Scott visits Schools raising awareness on stammering. The first time he did this was at Tadcaster in front of over 100 students in an assembly. Scott recalls it being a very daunting experience, waiting to be introduced then standing up, but once he got started all was fine. Feedback from students has been 100% positive and he can see he has had a massive impact on them which makes him feel really happy.

Congratulations

Two Year 13 students have been offered places at the University of Oxford.

Jacob O'Toole to study Maths/Computer Science and Ruby Glover to study Biology at Brasenose College.

Congratulations to both students along with good luck in their examinations in the summer.



THE LEGAL APPRENTICE

In partnership with
THE TIMES



Well done to the Year 12 team who are through to round 2 of The Legal Apprentice.

Tadcaster Grammar School's New Autism Base

Field View Learning Hub



The amazing staff of Field View from left to right Vikki ward, Richard Potts, Deborah Clark, Kim Heneachon.

Thanks to a great deal of hard work, the amazing generosity of parents and trades people, Field View Learning Hub opened its doors on Thursday 21 February. More fundraising is planned to help with work that still needs doing inside, and more importantly the outside area, but students will now be able to use the fantastic facilities the hub has to offer.

After



Before



Learning Life Saving Skills

Over this half-term, Year 10 students on the Vocational Life Skills (VLS) course have been working on improving their confidence in Life Saving; a skill taught to all students at Tadcaster Grammar School in Year 7 and 8 through Life Skills lessons and the "Restart a Heart" Day.

The students have had the opportunity to participate in 3 sessions at Tadcaster Swimming Pool, which included practical and theory learning. The students have had great fun learning a variety of skills, including how to rescue someone from water using a wide range of techniques - and even without getting wet! They also know that in a real emergency, should you have to enter the water, how this is done safely by the Lifeguards.

Students had to demonstrate to the trainers at Tadcaster Pool that they knew how to assess a situation before treating a casualty; also how to check if the casualty needed moving prior to checking if they were breathing; then how to check for normal breathing and how to give CPR. They have also learnt how to put a person into the recovery position, if they are breathing, and why this saves so many lives. Students learnt how to give CPR to infants, children and adults and which songs work best to hum in your head to make sure you are giving compressions to the correct rhythm.

The students then had to participate in a 3 - hour course with St John Ambulance, where trainer Caroline tested the students on a variety of First Aid situations, to gain a First Aid Certificate. Students were tested on completing a Primary Survey using DR S ABC which stands for Danger, Response, Shout (for help), Airway, Breathing, Circulation. Students were tested through discussion, practical and written tasks.

Staff from Tadcaster Swimming Pool and St John Ambulance taught the students that the most important thing to consider when giving First Aid is your safety, as you cannot help if you become a casualty too! Also if you are in any danger call 999 and let the experts deal with the situation.



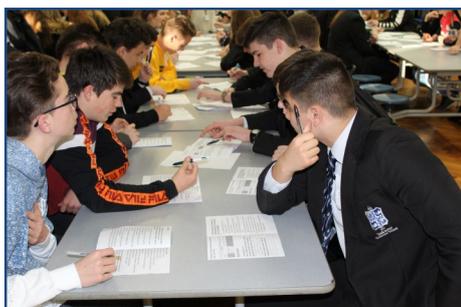
St John Ambulance



Bonjour St Chely d'Apcher

On Tuesday 19th February we were lucky enough to host some special visitors to Tadcaster Grammar School who came all the way from France! The students and teachers of St. Chely d'Apcher, Tadcaster's twinned town, were welcomed by students who are currently studying French at GCSE or A-Level, most of whom had already had the chance to talk to each other through pen pal letters. The aim of the day was to introduce the French students to what life at an English school is really like, to practise speaking more fluently, and most importantly to make friends and have fun! The morning consisted of some speaking activities before experiencing an English and an A-Level Biology lesson. They completed a practical and didn't shy away from engaging in conversations and asking questions.

The students then completed a treasure hunt around the school, trying to work out what each area of the school might be called and what it is used for. They were amazed at the large grounds, the numerous buildings, and the beauty of Toulston Lodge. A game of bingo was also held to see if the French students could remember English numbers and introduce them to some of the rhymes that go along with them in bingo. After lunch, the sixth formers went to make Yorkshire Puddings! The other students played benchball and discussed what they thought of the day and what they learned. This was a final way to enjoy communicating with each other and, of course, having lots of fun...[read more >>](#)



Lost and Found

The main office does a sterling job in returning lost items to students from an extensive collection!!! At the moment, we have quite a few pairs of glasses, all without identification, that have been with us for quite some time. We have shared this photo with students, but if you recognise any glasses, please do let us know or send your young person to collect them from the main office. In mid-March we will donate any unmarked glasses to charity.



Free School Meals

Are you entitled?

Do you think you could be entitled to Free School Meals? For more information please contact v.hubbard@tgs.starmat.uk

Contact Details

Please remember to inform the school of any changes to contact details for your son/daughter to - Student Records Manager a.haddock@tgs.starmat.uk or Student medical information to - Matron j.chauda@tgs.starmat.uk

If you subscribe to Letters Home via the school website, please also remember to update your preferences if you change your email and also check that you are subscribed.

Lettings and Facilities

Tadcaster Grammar School are now working with Tadcaster Swimming Pool Trust to introduce a new ground management scheme to provide accessible facility bookings to the community. We offer an extensive range of facilities for hire over two sites in Tadcaster. We can accommodate requests from clubs, businesses, individuals and groups.

Our aim is to improve the community's health by increasing community engagement in sport and activities....[read more>>](#)

Football and Rugby Pitches

Outdoor grass pitches with changing facilities available evenings & weekends

Gymnasium

Ideal for basketball, netball, badminton, gymnastics or any indoor activity

Swimming pool

Open for private swimming sessions, galas and club bookings

All weather pitch

Brand new all weather outdoor multi sports pitch



Diary Dates

Wed 6 March	Y7 Parents' Evening
Fri 8 March	Sixth Form Visit to Berlin
Mon 18 March	Y8 Girls' HPV Vaccinations
Wed 20 March	Training Day
Thurs 21 March	Y8 Parents' Evening
Fri 29 March	Y8 Ipswich v Hull Visit
Mon 8 April	KS3 Drama Production 7pm
Wed 10 April	Spring Festival 7pm
Thurs 11 April	School closes for Easter
Friday 12 April	Training Day
Friday 12 April	Y11 Geographers Visit Iceland
Friday 12 April	Y10 Ski Canada
Mon 29 April	School Re-opens

Diary Dates  ...[read more>>](#)