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Dear Parents and Carers,

Once again we have had a very busy half term here at Canon Lee School. The Science Department have engaged in lots of extra-curricular activities, over the last 6 weeks, including the Faraday Challenge. Six year 7 pupils went to Selby High School to take part, where they competed against teams from other schools on a task involving science, engineering and coding. Each team was asked to come up with a brand new product that used a microbit (mini computer) to solve an everyday problem. Our team worked well together and designed a creative product to help patients take their medication on time. The pupils had to code and engineer the microbit themselves, which was a big challenge, but they used their problem solving skills and persevered to come up with their final products. Finally, each team presented their ideas to the judges – our team was confident and got over their nerves to deliver an excellent pitch. Although they didn't win overall, our team worked extremely hard and took on the challenge, using technology and skills they had never used before. Hopefully the day has inspired some engineers of the future!

Canon Lee Science Department also welcomed scientist Dr JP Foster from Epistem on the 22nd January. He talked to Year 9 about possible career pathways in science and his own career trajectory. The Year 9 scientists were interested to hear how he invented the modern pregnancy testing kit and worked with the scientists behind IVF and the cloning of 'Dolly the Sheep'. He brought in his new project "The Gene Drive" to present to the students. This provoked some excellent questions on how it is being used to revolutionise the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis in the developing world, and how the American Ministry of Defence could utilise the device for their fight against biological warfare.

Students are also engaging in extra curricular sport. With ever increasing numbers attending the Friday open basketball session at Canon Lee we entered the York & District league in Year 9. Basketball in York has a strong reputation and is played to a high standard with local teams playing at a regional and national standard so we knew it would be a steep learning curve. This was true with the early season fixtures but the more we played the better we became, growing in confidence and skill level. Just before Christmas a narrow away win at Manor meant we finished fourth overall and that qualified us through to the end of season play offs. Despite our best performance of the season we lost our play-off game. What an enjoyable season the squad have had, huge strides forward on the court; less so with the singing on the bus!! In total 16 students represented the school.

The school is involved in Sky Sports 'Living for Sport' project where they take part in 3 sessions a week leading up to some coaching sessions in a local primary school. The aim is for pupils to build self-esteem and to understand the importance of discipline, team work and rules in sport and how this can be applied to all areas of life. We have had a number of inspirational sports people working with these students including, Rachel Mackenzie an Olympic Thai boxer and ex England Rugby player Paul Broadbent.

Canon Lee School is delighted to be running Readathon again this year, from 29th February-6th March. Readathon raises funds to put books in hospitals, to entertain children who are ill. Money also goes to Roald Dahl's Marvellous Children's Charity, CLIC Sargent and Together for Short Lives.

Every student will receive a sponsor card, with the aim of receiving sponsorship from family and friends, according to how much they read throughout the week. Students should not ask strangers for sponsorship. They will then read as much as possible during that week before collecting the sponsor money and returning it to school, along with the sponsor card. We have over 500 students. So if every student can raise £1-£5, that would make a terrific donation to the Readathon charities. Some students may raise more than this, but the important thing is for every child to take part.

100% of the sponsor money will go directly these fantastic charities. Our school will also receive books to the value of 20% of the total amount raised, as a gesture of thanks. We would like every student to participate in Readathon, so please encourage your child to join in and read as much as possible.

Congratulations to the Year 10 Young Enterprise Group 'Olympus Entrepreneurs', who set up a Trade Stand at the Novotel to sell their Valentine's Day Hampers. They also pitched their business ideas in front of 'York Trusted Professionals' group. They were true ambassadors for the school and the professionals were very impressed with their ideas, their product and their presentation skills. This has resulted in a 2nd highly successful season of sales – where all the stock sold out!

The Year 10 Work Experience programme will run from 14th March – 24th March. We wish Year 10 luck as they embark on their work experience. This will be a fantastic opportunity for them to gain valuable industry experience and we know they will do themselves and their school proud!

We are extremely proud of the students who received their Duke of Edinburgh awards at a special ceremony. Over 50 students from Canon Lee were presented with their D of E Bronze and Silver awards. Each year an annual presentation evening is arranged by the local authority where all schools attend and are presented with their awards. We had 82 students complete this past year and were the largest cohort despite being the smallest school! A massive well done to all the staff and students involved.

As you can see our students are involved in lots of different activities alongside the work that is going on in the classroom. As always we really appreciate your support in encouraging the students to arrive on time for school and in full uniform, fully equipped. The students have really responded well to the increased use of the planner, and I hope you can see an increase in the number of house points recorded in them.

We hope you and your families have a good February half term and that the students return rested and ready for work on Monday the 22nd of February.

Yours faithfully



Mr R Crane
Executive Headteacher



Mrs F Johnston
Associate Headteacher