

Voice

VALE OF
YORK
ACADEMY



THE VALE OF YORK ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Newsletter 16 | 23rd March - Bumper Easter Edition!

Message from the Principal

What a busy term! I would like to thank everyone for their patience while the school was closed due to snow. We will always keep parents updated about snow via Twitter, the school website, Parentpay texts and the local radio. It appears, however, that we have a number of out-of-date phone numbers on Parentpay accounts. As such, your child will shortly be given a letter confirming the details which we hold on file; please do ensure you have up to date details logged at school so that you receive timely texts with important news.

As this is a key term for the school, one which is always filled with events both academic and

pastoral, this newsletter has been filled with a flavour of how successful we have been in the last ten weeks.

Year 11 have just sat their second mock exams of the year and are showing steady progress. They are now in the final push to their GCSEs, which take place five weeks after the Easter holidays. Year 10 and Year 9 are getting geared up for exams too; these will take place directly after Easter and will provide us with important information about their progress after over 20 weeks on their GCSE courses.

I would like to remind parents that there is a '10 top tips for revision' document which can be found by following the 'Resources for Year 11 Parents' tab on the website.

Please remember that a number of Year 11 revision sessions will be taking place over the Easter holidays. We would like to ensure that the students make the most of the time given, time which key staff will be giving up to support them at this stage.

Finally, we have made fantastic new appointments to both the Head of English and Head of Science vacancies since the last newsletter, with Mr Jonathon Gill and Ms Diane Pickering respectively. This ensures that our teaching staff posts are at full capacity.

Happy Easter!

Mrs H Dowds

Ready, set, write!

The National Young Writers' Award is back and we are pleased to announce that the team from Explore Learning, York, will be visiting the School to promote this competition.

All students up to the age of 14 will be invited to write a 500-word story on the theme of 'real-life heroes', and the entries will be judged by David Walliams.

The prize for the national winner includes £500 worth of books for their school, a chance to meet David Walliams, and a family trip to Disneyland Paris. Further details can be found at <https://www.explorelearning.co.uk/national-young-writers-awards/> or ask Miss Slingsby.

Recently, we were able to host the latest Clifton and Rawcliffe joint residents meeting. With our own student council in attendance, it was a productive and informative evening and we would like to thank everyone who came along.

The University of York and York Learning will be providing free education courses on a range of topics including Environmental Studies and Criminal Justice. These courses are open to all adults. For further information, please contact Jane Cullen at jane.cullen@york.gov.uk.

Annual Awards Evening

On 7th February, we were very pleased to host Niki Doeg as our guest speaker at the Awards Evening for students and school leavers.

Students, parents, and staff members attended the event to celebrate the success and achievements of students in school.

Staff hosted last year's year 11 students before the event to catch up with their progress since their GCSE exams.

Head boy and girl Joseph Stancliffe and Holly Cairns welcomed students to the stage to receive their awards, and Mina Rodgers, John Tuffen, and Eve Clark gave musical performances.

Mr Stancliffe, who organised the event, was impressed with the amount and quality of the achievements and said, "thanks to this event, we were able to reward both present students and those students who achieved brilliant results in their GCSEs last summer".

Niki Doeg, who presented each student with their award, was one of four Yorkshire Transatlantic rowers who achieved success in 2016, subsequently breaking the world record as the oldest all-female crew to row across the Atlantic Ocean.

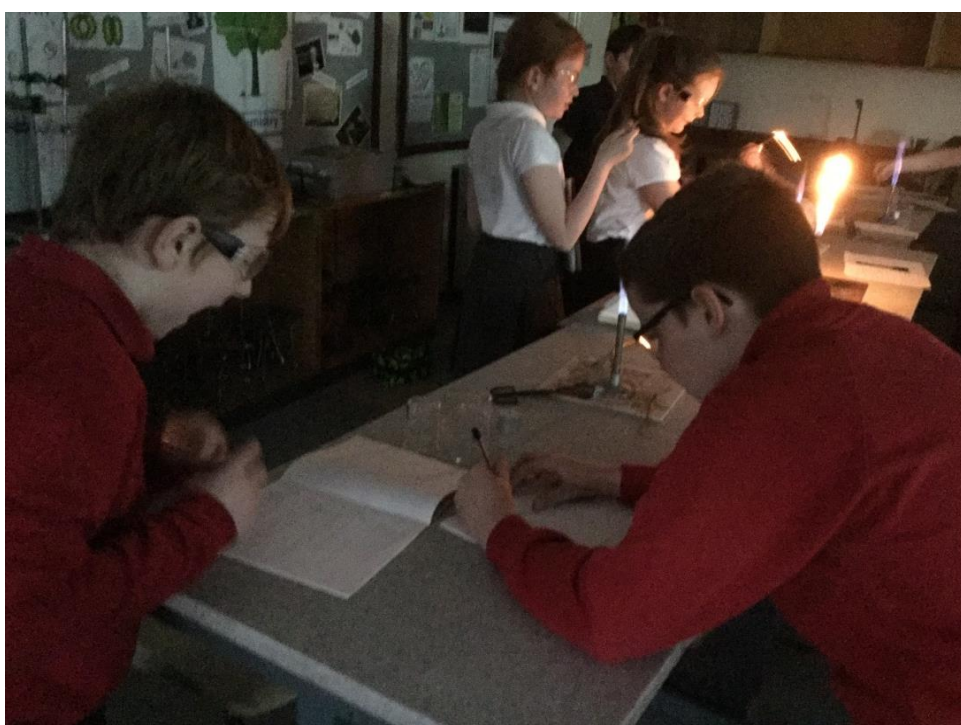
Guests at the event enjoyed her inspirational story, which ended with the key message that success is possible if you face your challenges and try your best.

Many thanks to all of the students, parents, and staff members who joined us in the celebrations for what proved to be a great evening.



The Voyagers return to the Vale of York Academy

Following on from very successful recent visits to the Vale of York, we were delighted to welcome back our Voyagers - the Gifted and Talented pupils from our local primaries who are part of the VOYAGE Project. This time, they were solving problems in Science with Mr Vine. It was an exciting session that certainly went off with a bang - the 'bang' being the hydrogen exploding! Again, staff members were very impressed with the resilience, ability, and teamwork skills the students were able to demonstrate, and we are excited to invite them back for the next session.



Weekly Spelling Challenge

This year, our weekly Tutor Time Literacy sessions have focused on supporting students with their knowledge and use of vocabulary, as well as their accuracy of spelling. Students have been preparing for a weekly test of specifically chosen words that will support and stretch their use of English. Supporting the students at home is vital to their success in school, so we have created a page on our school website - <http://www.valeofyorkacademy.org/spelling-challenge/> - which lists all words for each year group, and which will be updated on a weekly basis.

The Student Book Review

Kate Judson, Year 8, reviews Michael Morpurgo's The Eagle in the Snow.



Key dates

- 9th April – Vale of York Academy reopens after Easter
- 11th April – SLT drop-in, 4-6pm in the library
- 17th April – Year 7 Parents Evening, 4-7pm
- 25th April – Spring Concert
- 16th-27th April - Year 9 & 10 Exams
- 30th April to 11th May - Year 10 Work Experience
- 14th May - GCSE Exams start

Successful spelling revision methods

1. Look, cover, write, check – the repetition of this method helps students to memorise letter orders. A student looks at the word, covers it, writes it from memory, and then checks for accuracy – a firm favourite from primary school.
2. Add a letter – repetition strikes again! By adding a letter of the word each time they write it down, students are repeating the process of writing the word accurately – a, ac, acc, accu, accur, accura, accurat, accurate, accuratel, accurately.
3. Post it – frequently seeing words spelled correctly can help in remembering letter orders. Writing individual words on post it notes and sticking them around the house will increase their familiarity with vocabulary.

Please attempt all three revision methods to see which one works for you.

"I received this book as a Christmas gift a few years ago and I had finished it by Boxing day! I was absolutely blown away by the storyline. In my History class, we have been studying the first and second world wars, so I found it even more interesting and enjoyable.

The Eagle in the Snow was originally published in October 2015, but I admire its ongoing relevance.

The novel is set in 1940, just as the second world war has begun and a young boy and his mother are evacuating to the countryside by train. As a fleet of German bomber planes have targeted this particular train, it has been chased into a dark tunnel, and forced to remain in the dark until the coast is clear. The boy and his mother listen to a fellow passenger's story, in an effort to settle their minds and pass the time.

This stranger's story is filled with twists and turns, and hard decisions, including one that could possibly

have prevented the very situation they were in. I found the story moving and pertinent.

I thoroughly enjoyed the story, and how it switches between two different perspectives. I found the narratives extremely refreshing and this made me want to read on. I also have a huge bias towards fiction based on fact, which I believe makes a story much more interesting.

This novel was voted Winner of the Children's Book Awards 2017, and has received considerable success since its release.

I would definitely recommend you read this novel, and if you do end up giving it a shot, I hope you enjoy it just as much as I did!

-Kate Judson

Tune in next newsletter for another book review.

Duke of Edinburgh Awards Evening

The Vale of York Academy is the largest Duke of Edinburgh school provider in the city, and the achievements of our students in gaining Duke of Edinburgh awards were recognised in an awards evening last month.

All students involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award were invited to collect their certificates and pins from the Lord Mayor of York, Barbara Boyce. Current Year 11 students received their Bronze Awards and school leavers also returned to pick up Silver Awards, a huge achievement for the School.

In addition to this, students from the Vale of York Academy presented their experiences to the city-wide audience during the event.

The Duke of Edinburgh Co-ordinator, Mark Rampling, said of the students, "over thirty of our students were there to receive their awards and they, as ever, did us proud".

This year, we will have an amazing group of 37 students completing their Bronze Award and 11 students completing their Silver Award.

Next steps

The season is now underway with Bronze and Silver evening walks taking place. The practice weekend will take place in May. Gold students had a training weekend in the Lake District (16-18th March) and this saw them wild camping on Glaramara (783m). During Easter, the students will spend four days walking and camping at sites across the Yorkshire Dales.



Year 11 Easter Revision Timetable

Monday 26 th March	Tuesday 27 th March	Wednesday 28 th March	Thursday 29 th March	Friday 30 th March
History 9am-12pm S1, S2	Art 10am-2pm S4	Art 10am-2pm S4	Maths Select group 10am-12pm	
Maths Select group 12-2pm	Science 10am-12pm G37		Media 9am-2pm S5	
	Product Design 9am-1pm G2	Media 9am-2pm S5		
	PE 10am-12pm F37			

Monday 2 nd April	Tuesday 3 rd April	Wednesday 4 th April	Thursday 5 th April	Friday 6 th April
	English sessions 9am-12pm English rooms	Maths Set 1 9-11am Maths rooms	German 9-11am Spanish 11am-1pm	
		Cam Nat Sport 9.30am-2.30pm F38	ICT 9.30am-12pm S4	
		Health and Social Care F13 9.30am-2.30pm	French 9am-2pm G98	



Sporting success

Netball

On what was a beautiful, but incredibly cold evening, netball teams along with their supporters braved the conditions to enjoy a wonderful evening of 'High 5'. As it was a qualifier for the York Finals, a very competitive event, it was played fairly and consistently. Congratulations to all who took part from Skelton, Clifton with Rawcliffe and Clifton Green, and many thanks to Mrs Duncalf and Mia Edson from year 10 for their excellent umpiring throughout the match.

Cricket

Congratulations to our year 9 girls cricket team! Not only have they been playing in a competition targeted at older students, they qualified for the Yorkshire Finals which took place on 9th March at Headingley Cricket Ground. This was a fantastic success.



Basketball

After the success of the current year 11 squad last season, there was a quiet confidence about the 2017-18 season. With good numbers training regularly on a Friday after school, both squads started the league phase of the season with tough fixtures. Aside from a few small losses, the U13 and U16 teams were unbeaten for the rest of the league, eventually finishing in second place, each in their respective leagues.

Mr Halifax would like to thank all of the basketball players for their hard work and commitment over what has been a very challenging and successful season.



School-wide success

Primary school Languages Day

Our local year 4 students visited the Vale of York Academy to take part in our annual languages workshops. On what was a very busy day, around 150 pupils, supported by our year 9 and year 10 language students, engaged in problem solving and vocabulary tasks, all based around the French language. Thanks to Mrs Haig and Miss Slingsby for organising the event.

It's a numbers game

On Wednesday 7th February, Maths sets 1 and 2 had a visit from the BAE systems Education road show.

Year 8 learned all about the use of Maths in the Royal Navy, for example how they use Maths to balance ships, ensuring they do not sink or tip over.

The road show included many exciting magic tricks and experiments using Maths; students saw a robot in action as well as a demonstration of a giant propeller backpack that can lift a human off the ground and 'fly'.

This was an inspiring and fun afternoon, demonstrating the many uses of Maths in the real world.

Mrs Ward hopes that the visit inspired some of our young Vale of York mathematicians into a career in Engineering.



Drama Showcases

The Twits

Drama students left audiences truly "disgusted" in their recent performance of Roald Dahl's 'The Twits'. Pupils from years 7, 8, and 9 performed the spectacular show to a sell-out audience over two evenings in February. The performance saw the horrible Mr and Mrs Twit perform 'nasty tricks on one another' until members of the audience were able to convince the Twits believe that their world had been turned upside-down. The show was a huge success and as always, a proud moment for Ms Nicholson seeing such amazing talent across all three year groups. Well done to all involved.

York Mystery Plays

The York Mystery Plays are coming to York and 2018 will mark the second year that students from our school have been involved. This year, students from the Vale of York Academy will take part in a play titled 'The Fall of Man'. This is an exciting opportunity for budding actors, screenwriters, and directors.

The play will take place in September across York.



Brighton Rock

Year 11 Drama students went to see 'Brighton Rock' at York Theatre Royal as part of their GCSE course. Both students and staff had a wonderful evening watching a fantastic show. It was a pleasure to take such lovely students in preparation for their exam.

Curtain call for year 11 students

Students performed their scripted pieces to friends and family at their final GCSE showcase evening this month. Ms Nicholson would like to say how proud she is of everyone's hard work and effort.

York Students in Schools

We are pleased to announce a continued partnership with the University of York through York Students in Schools (YSIS), an organisation which allows university students to help out and engage with local primary and secondary schools. We have been able to offer placements to subject specialist undergraduates across a range of departments, and the students are really benefitting from the extra support. Holly Marks, a Biology undergraduate from the University of York, commented on the partnership and said that the experience has made her realise that she would like to pursue a career in teaching. Many thanks to the undergraduate students and the University.

Community's Got Talent

We are very excited to have launched *Community's Got Talent* at the Vale of York Academy! As we are already aware of how much potential the young people of the area have, Mr Orr thought that it was time to bring everyone together for a special event.

Mr Orr and his team of year 10 judges, all of whom are doing Creative GCSE subjects, visited the primary schools and held auditions for any pupils, in any year, with any type of performance. We were blown away by the quality of talent on show and had to make the tricky decision about who to put through. Eventually, we narrowed it down to 16 finalists who performed in the *Community's Got Talent* Finals at Vale of York on Friday 16th March.



Cooking up a storm

We would like to congratulate students who entered and competed in this year's Future Chef competition.

Will Garnett and Nat Keatphanon were the winners of the school round, and proceeded to the local area final which was held at Selby College. They had to cook against students from other schools in North Yorkshire. In true *MasterChef* style, they had to produce two dishes in 90 minutes.

Will decided on a cheesecake and a seafood risotto, Nat opted for a Thai lamb curry and a typical Thai dessert. This round was judged by professional chefs from the industry who either work in hotels or have their own restaurant. There was

tough competition, but Nat was crowned the North Yorkshire winner.

Nat moved up to the regional final which was hosted at Sheffield Hallam University, a real experience for everyone.

According to Ms Zulkernaim, the quality of the dishes was phenomenal. She was very proud of her students who had taken part, particularly Nat:

"Although Nat was not named the winner of the stage, he still won in my eyes as he has gained a whole lot of new experiences and become even more confident.

So I would like to say Nat and Will deserve a massive well done for having the courage to enter a competition and cook in front of professional chefs!"



Spotlight on Charity

Close shave for Cancer Research

Mr Wilson, Year 9 Progress Leader, took the plunge last month and agreed to shave his head for charity. Year 9 students across all forms helped to raise money for Cancer Research, and his head was shaved at break time in front of hundreds of students who had all supported the cause.

North York Moors for charity

Getting into the staff spirit of raising money for charity, Paul and Richard Bedingham took part in a charity walk for St Leonard's Hospice last month. Their task was to walk 25 miles through the North York Moors and they had 15 hours to complete this feat, in cold and snowy conditions. The brothers raised £600 for the charity on this trip, and have raised £4,100 in total since 2012. They would like to thank the Vale of York Academy staff and partners who have generously donated to every walk they have done.

Staff and community partners quiz

In February, we held our annual Staff and Community Partners Quiz. With a record number of 14 teams entering, our colleagues from Manor were hoping to defend their crown and title. However, it was the team from Vale of York Academy who left the evening victorious. Mr Orr, who organised the event, was happy with its success: "It was encouraging to have such a community atmosphere, with teams from Clifton Green and Burton Green Primaries, and the Clifton Ward Team among our guests."

Making it to Morocco

Students are still putting all of their efforts into raising money for the upcoming charity trip to Morocco. Reports from Mr Rampling indicate that they have reached a grand total of £12,000 so far.

Mia Edson and Fay Clark held a race night on Saturday 10th March, which was a great success and raised over £1,200. Well done girls and thank you to everyone who was involved in the evening.

On 14th April, from 10am-2pm, the students will be bag packing in Tesco Extra, Clifton Moor to raise funds for the group and more events will be organised for the final term of the year.



Rewards trip to Xscape

We are now six months into the new rewards system - Positive Discipline - where students can cash in house points for prizes or save them up for more substantial rewards. We asked students to feedback on the system and they were very positive about how the system works. In addition to this, around 100 rewards have been claimed since September, including York City football tickets and swimming passes.

Alongside this is our end of term rewards trip to Xscape, which has taken place in the last week of term, and which has proven to be great fun for all the students and staff members involved.

