



Dear Parent / Carer

This term has been another busy one for staff and students alike.

We have celebrated our connection with the land this term in a variety of ways. Our Team Nidderdale chickens are now well settled and providing eggs for the staff team and opportunities for calm reflection to other members of our school community. Mrs Wright is developing a small animal care course for some students and is making secret plans for the possibility of a new addition or two to our collection!

All of our Year 7 and 8 students have had the opportunity to be part of an Outdoor Education day, whilst a smaller group of Year 8 students and KS4 have Outdoor Education as part of their weekly curriculum. Two groups of Year 10 girls have had the privilege of experiencing the calming and therapeutic benefits of trekking with llamas and alpacas.

Following up the school's contribution to the success of the Pateley in Bloom team winning Gold, Dr Binding has ambitious plans for tree planting and wild meadows which will bring Gardening Club and the aims of the Connecting Classrooms project together.

Our focus on academic success has continued with a real emphasis on exploring the latest research that underpins high quality teaching and a commitment to 'Teach to the Top'. Students have had opportunities to visit universities to engage with lots of interesting ideas and topics beyond our usual curriculum. Many Year 11 students have regularly attended revision classes across a range of subjects and all students have worked hard towards their recent Mock Exams.

The development of our Flourish Curriculum is well underway as you will know from the updates you have received from Mrs Kay. You can read later in this newsletter about our involvement in an important mental health pilot project.

The Autumn term is the longest of the school year and having packed so much into it, I have no doubt that staff and students alike are ready for a well-earned rest. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a restful and relaxing break. Staff will be returning to school on Monday 6th January for our annual well-being day and we will look forward to welcoming students back on Tuesday 7th January.

Kath Jordan, Headteacher



Netball News

Year 10 netball team beat Boroughbridge High School's team 10-3 with Frankie Sutton named as Player of the Match. Year 7 also played and showed massive improvement from their last game.

On 20th November we hosted Upper Wharfedale and Year 9 were victorious in winning 9-7. Lizzie Parkin's shooting ability won her Player of the Match.

The Year 7 team played very well and almost stole a win with the match ending on a 3-3 draw. D'Arcy Garforth-Nelson was awarded Player of the Match for her split-landing skills around the D.

Ms Wilcock

On Wednesday 15th November, our most enthusiastic Year 7 Accelerated Reader students were rewarded for their reading efforts with a trip to the Everyman Cinema in Harrogate. Year 7 will be following the Accelerated Reader scheme throughout their first year at Nidderdale High, giving them plenty more chances to win rewards as the year progresses.



Well done and congratulations to Connie who came 1st in the 50m Backstroke in the Yorkshire swimming trials and 5th in the North East regionals.



National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA)

We are pleased to announce Nidderdale High School is a member of the National Schools Equestrian Association (NSEA) entering into the world of inter-school equestrian sporting competitions. See Mrs Ashton if you are interested in NSEA eventing.



Save the date!

Year 11 Prom will be held at Ripley Castle on Friday 26 June 2020. Further details will be sent out soon with menu choices, cost and deposit payment information.

The Student Leadership Team are planning lots of fundraising ideas which they hope students and parents will support to raise fund for Prom and their chosen charities.

A Career in Law

Recently a Cambridge Graduate came into school offering our Year 11 students hints and tips on University life and the opportunity to hear about the route they could take in to Law. Alfie Ashton ran a series of small workshops giving inspiration and guidance to our aspiring Law students.



Year 7 and Year 8 Days at Bewerley Park Outdoor Education Centre

In November, year 7 and 8 students participated in an Outdoor Education day at Bewerley Park. Pupils grew in confidence as they tackled adventurous activities such as gorge walking, canoeing, caving and mountain biking. They developed their resilience and teamwork through overcoming challenges and braving the elements! We hope the Outdoor Education days have helped the students build friendships, rise to challenges and increased their love of the great outdoors that they have on their doorsteps. Well done year 7 and 8 – you should be extremely proud of how well you all did.

Mr Couldwell

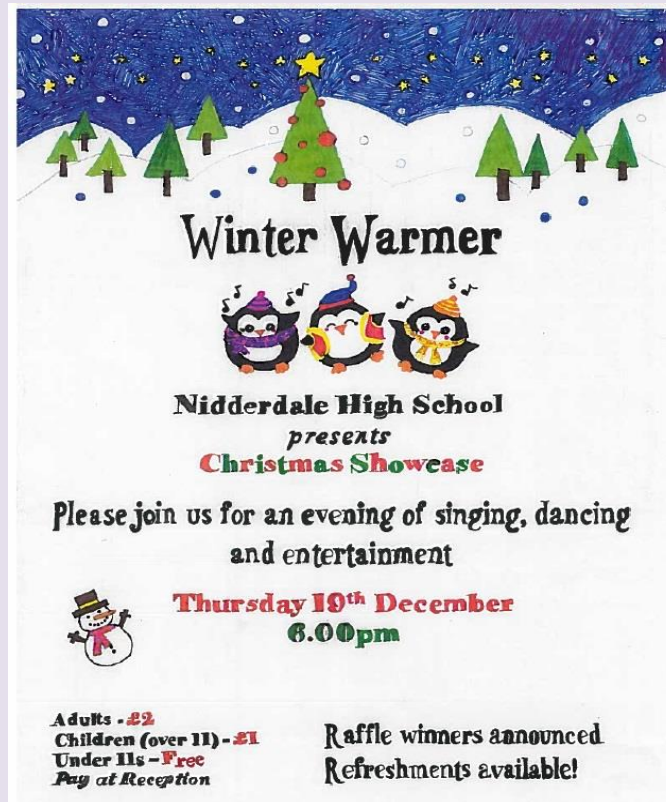


Senior Team News

The Student Leadership Team will raise funds for their two chosen charities Royal Agricultural Benevolent Fund (R.A.B.I) and Climate Coalition. Information about both charities is available on their websites: <https://rabi.org.uk/> and www.theclimatecoalition.org/about-us

In the new term, Sally Conner from the RABI, supported by Senior Students, will be presenting assemblies highlighting the important work RABI do in this area. You can help too by supporting our charity events over the next few months.





GOthic LITERATURE MONTH

Gothic Literature Month gave students the opportunity to enter the Library Scary Short Story in two Sentences competition. After reading dozens of fantastically spooky stories Miss Lester chose 3 winners. Well done to Nere Watson-Cody, Joe Alderson and Gracie Hudson for successfully giving Miss Lester Gothic nightmares and winning a book prize each! Miss Lester



PTFA. If you would like to get involved please contact admin@nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk. Your help is appreciated in whatever capacity it is offered - it does not have to be a forever commitment - your help at just one event is thoroughly appreciated whether that be baking, making drinks or selling refreshments.

On 11th November at 11 a.m. a group of Year 9 students attended the Remembrance Service in Pateley Bridge, along with local primary schools and members of the armed forces, both present and retired. A very poignant service was led by the leaders of all local churches and a number of wreaths were laid in remembrance of those people who had died in conflicts around the world.

Year 9 are nearing the end of their unit of work on the First World War and have a really good understanding about the sacrifices of that particular conflict. All students represented school impeccably and special thanks go to Dylan Sawyer and Sacha Rhodes, who laid a wreath for Nidderdale High School.

Mr Connors



Inspire Project

As part of our ongoing commitment to developing our Social, Emotional and Mental Health Curriculum, we are really proud to have been selected as one of a small number of schools to take part in a national pilot project in 2020. The Inspire Project, supported by the Anna Freud Centre for Children's Mental Health, is piloting a range of strategies to be used in schools to promote positive mental health.

We have been asked to trial and feedback on the use of daily Mindfulness strategies. This means that from January, all students in Years 7 and 8 will be supported to use Mindfulness each day.

As you will be aware from Mrs Kay's Fabulous Flourish updates, we will be continuing to use Mindfulness techniques with other year groups too. We look forward to updating you on our progress with the project and perhaps sharing some of our Mindfulness techniques for use at home.

Ms Jordan



The Catering department continue to offer a wide range of healthy food and drinks both at break and lunchtime. This term we have also concentrated on reducing single-use plastics and introduced a 5p charge for takeaway containers.

Our **Christmas lunch** will be served to all staff and students on Wednesday 18th December – that's approximately 440 meals! We hope the whole school community enjoy this festive occasion.

What's new for next term – commencing January? We are planning:

- January – Chinese New Year celebration
- February – Shrove Tuesday, also called Pancake Day
- March – St Patrick's Day celebration
- April – Best of British – St George's Day celebration

Our menu is displayed weekly on the website www.nidderdale.n-yorks.sch.uk. Should you wish to discuss the menu or suggest healthy meals for our menu please contact us at school.

Mrs Naylor, Mrs Clark, Mrs Tinsley, Mrs Whelan and Mrs Jaques, Catering Team



Cyclocross – PTFA fundraising

The Yorkshire Cyclo Cross Association organised another Winter season Cyclocross event at Nidderdale High School on Sunday 11th November.

Over 160 junior and 90 senior cyclists took part. Mo Leeming Sykes Yr 10 student who races for Otley CC won her event. Her brother Dexter, who is an ex student of Nidderdale also won his event.

The PTFA ran a cafe for spectators and competitors and with a donation from YCCA they made £370. Thanks to parents and staff who baked cakes, made sandwiches and served in the pop up cafe.



Ministry of You – Fundraising

On Wednesday 26th November, the Year 7 social group Ministry of You made a start on their charity fundraising with a cake sale. They baked and decorated the cakes themselves and made £47 for the **Blue Cross animal charity**. Well done Tom, William and Dan for their cake selling efforts!

Children in Need Fundraising

On Children in Need day the school held a non-uniform day and with donations of £2 per person raised £694 for the Charity.



Staff Update

We recently welcomed Mr McBeath to our team as Site Manager. He brings a lot of experience and enthusiasm and we are confident he will help to improve our school environment.

We will also be welcoming Mr Pancott to our teaching staff team from January. Mr Pancott will be teaching History whilst Mrs Witherwick is on maternity leave. We wish Mrs Witherwick all the very best for the (very) imminent arrival of the newest member of the family!

Educational Visit

From 3 – 6 December 2019, students visited the Battlefields in France and Belgium. Day visits included an excursion to Vimy and the Somme region where students spent time at Vimy Memorial Park & Thiepval, Newfoundland Park, and La Boisselle. On day 2, students visited Ypres Salient and 'In Flanders Fields' Museum. Further excursions to Tyne Cot Cemetery, Langemark German Cemetery and Essex Farm took place. The student group also attended the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate to lay a wreath. More information about the impact of this visit is in the student report below.



Battlefields Trip 3 – 6 November

To me, the Belgium trip was a brilliant success. I felt that the entire experience really opened my eyes to the kind of suffering endured not only by the soldiers of the time, but of everyone affected then and even now.

The group set off at five in the morning on Tuesday 3rd December. Everyone was tired from excited sleepless nights and the early awakening so most students slept on the coach. I found myself gazing out of the window for the most part of the trip and the views alone from England, France and Belgium were stunning, the morning horizon had me entranced and only built up the excitement, and solemnness for what we were about to experience.

When we arrived at the lodge, we were allocated our rooms. The rooms were very comfortable and it was fantastic sharing dorms with friends. After we unpacked our things and changed into warmer clothes we set off for Menin Gate and went in small groups to find relatives. It helped so much knowing I had an ancestor who had fought for me to connect with the experience. We spent some time there trying to take it all in, before heading back to our dorms for bed.

The week was heavy, very heavy. The students did a brilliant job being respectful and were all solemn. The whole week went by so quickly and so emotionally most of it was a blur, leaving memories of beautiful and peaceful places of respect and reconciliation. The experience left everyone very emotional, and it was without a doubt hard to take in. Very hard.

Of the graves we went to, for me the heaviest were Langemark and Tyne Cot cemetery. The German graves and the largest of all graves for the First World War. The difference between the two was probably the most heartbreaking factor of the trip for me. Tyne Cot cemetery is the largest and probably most visually impressive out of the graves we visited. It was massive, and there was absolutely no way we could capture it without seeing it in person. I knew what to expect from previous recounts I had heard, but never imagined it would be so stunning and unexplainable as it was. Marble, polished graves and plants by each individual one. Roses, berries and poppies grew between them. Then, there were grand corridors leading into tiny circular gardens with towering walls, etched into them were all the names of the missing. It was truly indescribable.

A very large difference between Tyne Cot and Langemark is how not very large the German graves were. These were heart-breaking in their own way. As a part of Germany's punishment set in the treaty of Versailles was that they weren't given the proper space, or fit land to bury their sacrificed. The whole garden was smaller than that of a common church graveyard. Some graves even had twenty bodies buried under the same tomb. There were small stone slabs with names written so miniscule and cramped they were almost unintelligible. The graves this time were overwhelmingly small, and possibly the most tragic of all is the one shared grave holding thousands of dead in a single patch of the land. Uncountable amounts of bodies had been laid down one by one on top of each other buried however deep it had to be for sheer space. Poor marble cuboid structures lined the edge of it neatly with names scrawled carefully yet cramped appallingly close to one another across them. It was painful and even harrowing for us all.

I was one of the wreath layers at Menin gate. It was the first and last place we went to before the end of the trip. Late that night, I changed into my school uniform and laid the poppy wreath on a rack for the sombre event. The moment was stunning, and went by so quickly I barely got the time to realise it had happened. The moment was so special for me, my friends, the people watching and the school as a whole. I was proud to be representing us that day. When we left, most people were quiet on the bus, and despite the unfortunate weather on the ferry, we all returned safe and at least relatively calm. When I got home, I still couldn't really comprehend what I had seen. A once in a lifetime experience spent well and peacefully.

I highly recommend this trip. Going there, I felt things I had never felt before or as strongly. I gained memories I don't think I will ever quite forget and learned things I can never stop thinking about. It is an emotional rollercoaster for sure, but one I enjoyed and one that left me not sure what to think or say, but I knew this was a brilliant experience and that I couldn't get from anyone or anywhere else.

By Helena Macnish



Connecting Classrooms

We are delighted that Dr Binding's application for British Council Funding to organise a Connecting Classrooms project between Nidderdale schools and Kenyan schools has been a success. Project work will go on between Nidderdale High School, our six partner primary schools and seven linked schools in Kenya across the year. This work will focus on learning about and contributing towards the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals aimed at creating a fairer and more environmentally sustainable world by 2030. The funding, kindly provided by The Department for International Development (DFID) and the British Council, will allow students from different schools to work together to learn about some of the key challenges facing mankind and offer students an opportunity to contribute toward solutions. A key focus of the exchange will be professional development for teachers who will share ideas and learn about strategies for supporting students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The participating schools already have some great practical ideas around tree planting, wild meadow seeding and social enterprise projects that will, hopefully, become a community focus with a number of local families, kindly offering land for the planting projects. During 2020, opportunities for the wider community to engage in the project will be made available.

We will look forward to hosting the visiting Kenyan teachers in June/July 2020 and plans are already underway for our staff to visit our Kenyan partner schools in the summer holidays where all of the learning, training and environmental projects will be repeated.



York Christmas Market - Y11 trip **Friday 13th December**

To recognise the hardwork of our Year 11 students in their mocks, they were treated to a day exploring the York Christmas Markets. Thank you to the PTFA for funding the coach transport.



Forthcoming events

18 December – Christmas Lunch

19 Dec – Winter Warmer Christmas Showcase 6pm

20 December 3.15 – Close for Christmas break

6 January – Staff training day

7 January – Students return to school

13 January – Y9 Exams

16 January – Y10 Parents' Evening

School Governance. Mrs Kerry Body is elected as Parent Governor to fill the vacancy created by Mrs Roger's resignation. Details of the Full Governing Board, school policies and the board's meeting schedule is available on the school website's Governance tab ([click here to access](#)).

