

28th May 2021

Dear Parents

Today I was handed the box below – my invitation from Year 11 to their Prom, which takes place in a marquee in the grounds after half term. Today was the final day of their GCSE Teacher Assessments – which have taken place of the ‘real’ examinations this year. In many ways I feel that these assessments have been even harder for the students than the examinations which they have replaced – it has been a challenging half term for Year 11 and I am very proud of the way in which they have risen to this challenge. Teacher Assessed Grades have also added to staff workload – like most teachers of Year 11, I will be carrying a large pile of marking home tonight which must be completed over the half term. So I am also proud of our staff who have set assessments, marked, moderated and standardised for much of this half term. We can only hope that the current Year 10 will have a more normal examination season next summer. For now I wish Year 11 a safe and restful half term. When they return we have all sorts of exciting activities planned for them, before their final Leaver’s events.



By the end of this week most of Year 11 had already finished their assessments, with just a few catching up with those they had missed. So they have done a variety of different things in the last few days. I taught my class British Parliamentary Style debating this morning, while Mr Brown had 11 Set 2 Maths building bridges using spaghetti (he claims that this is a STEM based activity!) and tells me that they were largely successful...and Miss Price’s Science class made bath bombs!



Year 11 are, of course, not the only ones to be doing some creative activities this week. Mrs Johnson has sent me lovely pictures of Year 4, who enjoyed planting pots and weaving dreamcatchers to hang in the garden during their Activities session this afternoon.



The other theme this week seems to have been posters! Miss Barrass has asked me to feature Reception Fauna and Flora's poster all about integrity in the newsletter. She says that they all worked so hard and have such a good understanding of the word. Integrity has been our word for 'Thought For The Day' this half term. Here is their poster:

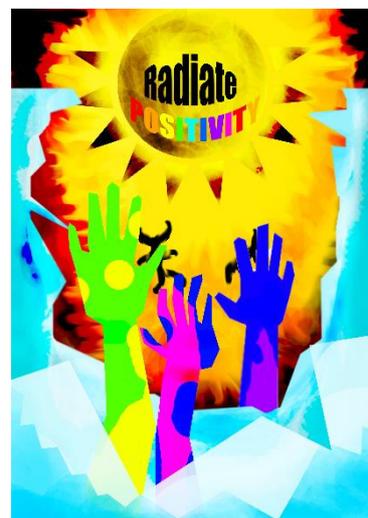


In the Senior School, Mrs Teasdale has run a competition to design a poster about Positivity over the last few weeks – and this week she has announced the winners. We got to do the judging at one of our SLT meetings and I have to say that it was incredibly hard to choose from such excellent entries! The final decision – after much deliberation – was as follows:

- 3rd Place: Martha Bainbridge 7S
- 2nd Place: Leah Calverley 7S
- 1st Place: Danylo Chertov 10P

And here is Danylo's winning entry – I am hoping for a copy to put up in my office to remind me always to think positively!

This week's sports fixture report comes from Mr Wilkinson and is about the Year 9 girls' football team:





Well done to all the girls playing in Tuesday's fixture v Hurworth (some were playing in their first ever game of football)!

The girls have trained and played well every Wednesday during activities time and have now been rewarded for this with a fixture and a regular training slot every Wednesday lunch with our new Games Captain - Jennie TG.

In the game tonight we knew we were up against it when finding out the opposition had a Middlesbrough Academy player! We were 3-0 down at half time but were competing well in a number of areas but not creating many chances. In the second half we improved our game and we're growing in confidence. We were much stronger going forward but did leave spaces at the back where we conceded again. Highlights included:- Olivia D coming close on a number of occasions and probably could have scored a hat trick. Ella G had the better of her defender making some great runs but couldn't apply the finishing touch.

The player of the match was Maisie M for her strong defensive play in the first half but also her offensive play late in the second half when pushing hard for a goal.

*Well done to everyone involved and we can look forward to more football in the future!
Mr Wilkinson*

Having started the newsletter with Year 11, who are so close to leaving us, I am going to finish with Year 10, who are about to take their place at the top of the school. I have had the pleasure of interviewing for Head Students and the new School Prefect team this week – it has been so fantastic to hear students speak so passionately about everything which Polam has given to them and what they would like to give back to their school in their final year with us. From those who have been with us since Reception to those who joined during Senior School, they were confident and articulate young people who are very much ready for leadership. Thus far we have appointed head Students, Prefects and Games Captains. We still have House Captains and Drama/Music Captains to appoint and so I will not formally announce the full student leadership team until these appointments are made. Nevertheless I am already very sure that we are all in safe hands for the next year!

The half term holiday is upon us. I hope that the sun shines and that we are all able to have some rest. Year 10 should begin revision for their examinations – but also do some less academic pursuits! Enjoy the week off – we will see everyone on Monday 7th June.

Best wishes

Kate Reid