

31<sup>st</sup> January 2020

Dear Parents

You may have seen that the Department for Education yesterday launched its Opportunity North East delivery plan, which aims to improve educational outcomes in secondary schools across the north-east of England. The £24 million three year programme focuses on five areas – transition to secondary school, teacher workforce, careers, access to higher education and the One Vision programme. At Polam we are lucky enough to be one of the One Vision schools – 28 secondary schools in the north-east - which are receiving funding and support from National Leaders of Education. In practical terms, for us this has meant support from Castleford Academy – an outstanding school near Leeds – and extra funding to train staff and to provide resources for pupils. If you would like to read more about the Opportunity North East programme you can access the delivery plan here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/opportunity-north-east-delivery-plan>

In school this week Year 9 have been very much focused on their future plans. As part of the GCSE options process they each had an individual interview with an employer on Wednesday, organised by Mr Robson, our Careers Leader and the Tees Valley Successful Futures Team. I had a lovely email from Candace Gilbert, who is one of the Successful Futures advisers, which said: *I have also had some fantastic feedback and praise for the students from the employers. Their level of maturity, confidence and good manners were all commented upon - they really are a credit to the school.* The Year 9 students also found the experience really useful – Mr Robson collected the following as part of his evaluation and feedback:

*Amber Batty - It gave me an idea of what real interviews will be like.*

*Emily Garnham - It was a good experience as a learning tool.*

*Ruben Richardson - It made me figure out what I want to do in the future.*

If you are a Year 9 parent, a reminder that the GCSE options and parents evening will be on Monday evening in the Mounsey building.



On Tuesday, Mrs Jones and a number of Polam Year 10 students attended the Maths Inspiration event at Newcastle University. Jessie Linfoot and Alfreda Batty write: *We heard*

*from three Maths lecturers and covered a variety of advanced mathematical topics including the mathematics behind boomerangs, guitars and England's woeful penalty skills. Overall it was a highly beneficial and educational experience, as well as an amazing day out!*

There has also been a good amount of sport this week. Miss Coggins has sent me this report about the dodgeball at the end of last week:

*Last Friday a group of year 5 children took part in a dodgeball tournament! They went out showing great spirit and had huge smiles on their faces throughout the afternoon. The key objective of the games was to show great honesty, which the children continued to show when playing, holding their hands up when they'd been hit/ caught out. They were praised about their sportsmanship and how they encouraged other teams when playing and spectating by other schools and their staff. I want to personally thank them for their behaviour throughout the afternoon even when they had lost a game they continued with smiling faces and cheering each other on! They certainly were a pleasure to take out of school.*



The other major sporting event this week was Badminton. The KS4 Key Stage 4 Polam Hall Girls played in the Tees Valley Finals on Wednesday night and Mr Wilkinson has sent me the results in this report:

- V Egglecliffe (Yarm) 4-1 Win
- V English Martyrs (Hartlepool) 5-0 Win
- V MacMillan College (Middlesbrough) 5-0 Win
- V Huntcliffe (Redcar & Cleveland) 3-2 Loss

*Losing two games at 20 all with first to 21. The girls were absolutely devastated not to win this match and miss out on the next round but finished a super second place overall. Never mind girls better luck next time.*



In lessons, 4T this week travelled back in time this week to 55BC to join Julius Caesar's first attempted invasion of Britain. Mr Turnbull has sent me his report on these exciting events:

*As legionaries we followed Roman commands to form a tortoise, a wedge, an orb and a line. We were well protected, using the scutum (shields) we had made. Unfortunately however, on*

*this occasion, the attacks of the Britons were too fierce and drove us back across the channel to Gaul.*



Of course Friday afternoons in Junior School are always activities and it has been the turn of KS2 children this week. Miss Barrass has asked me to say a big well done to Gardening Club 5H as they have succeeded in tidying a number of areas today – three bin bags filled!

It has also been Australia Day in Juniors today with activities led by Year 6 to raise money for those affected by the recent fires. Mrs Goodwin's report follows:

*6G have been raising money today to support the people and animals in Australia whose lives have been impacted by the bush fires.*

*The name the koala competition was very popular with children and staff alike. The winner of the competition will be announced in assembly on Wednesday morning. Good luck to all of those who entered.*

*Unfortunately, the games which were planned for lunchtime were cancelled due to a fire alarm. However, the cake and sweet stall was very busy with children spending the extra money which they brought. Thank you all for your support and donations which has helped us raise much needed funds.*

I have a few upcoming events to promote. Mr Turnbull has asked me to tell you all about Number Day, which is next Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February. He gave out a number to each class in assembly this morning which was very exciting – pupils will be investigating their number! Juniors are also encouraged to come to school next Friday wearing a shape or a number, with a suggested donation of £1 for NSPCC.

In Senior Reading this week I introduced a new award – the ABCD award for any student Acting Beyond the Call of Duty! The first recipients were Evelyn Watson and Alex Peart who have been running Miss Barker's theatre activity in her absence. They had been nominated by Mr Robson. Anyone can nominate a winner – and I already have two nominations for next time!

Mrs Dixon has asked me to remind you all about our holiday club – Polam Fun Club as places are filling fast!

The PHPA have asked me to include the following information about the Valentine's Disco:  
*The PHPA would like to announce the Valentines disco for Infants and Juniors taking place on Thursday February 13<sup>th</sup>. Infants: 4.30-5.45 and Juniors: 6.00-7.15pm. Tickets are available on Parentpay. We look forward to seeing you there. Regards PHPA*

I wish you a restful weekend and we look forward to another busy week!

Best wishes

Kate Reid