WILLIAM HOWARD SCHOOL

20 October 2023

SPOTLIGHT on YEAR 7

Dear Parents

I cannot believe we are already seven weeks into Year 7 and what a fantastic start our Year 7s have had. As soon as they stepped through the doors of William Howard School they have relished every opportunity we have given them and constantly demonstrated our core values of **Respect**, **Responsibility** and **Resilience.** Stepping up to Year 7 can be a daunting experience, but I am so proud of each student who has taken on their own challenges face on; each day they have strived to **be the best they can be**.

At William Howard School students are met with a range of opportunities in and out of lessons. The staff and I would like to share some highlights with you.

House Day

To welcome Year 7 into their new Houses, the students attended a Hogwarts-style 'Sorting Hat Ceremony' with their Heads of House. Once they had established which House they belonged to – Eden, Talkin, Gelt or Vindolanda – the students spent the rest of the day entering into a range of challenges and competitions to gain points for their new House Team. Activities included physical problem solving, a digital Lego challenge, a quiz, a sustainability challenge, biscuit decorating, a zoo Challenge and a dance-off.

At lunchtime, the students invited their House Tutors to have cake with them in the Performance Hall. The delicious cakes were made by Year 7 Food Technology students the previous day.

Thank you to everyone for participating with fantastic enthusiasm. Talkin House was declared the winner of the House Day but Eden House remains at the top of the overall House Points leader board… for now.

Art Lessons

Student were able to experience Art outside the classroom. They had a wonderful time experiencing a real flavour of work interactive art, installations, contemporary and historical art. It has evoked many discussions. The day was jam packed with a visit to the Baltic and then the Laing.

English Lessons

Students have engaged with their descriptive writing piece on the prehistoric world. We have enjoyed using the topic of dinosaurs with a key highlight being when the classroom turned into a museum with expert palaeontologists on hand to share lots of fascinating information about the prehistoric creatures. There were some amazing descriptive pieces from students, showing a natural talent for creative writing.

Food Tech Lessons

This term, Year 7 have been learning about food and nutrition and creating some tasty dishes. This group were making vegetable soup.

French and Spanish Lessons

Well done to all students who have created an account on *Memrise* and are learning their French and Spanish vocabulary regularly. We are already seeing an increase in retention of words in lessons and students getting full marks in their vocabulary tests! Keep it up everyone - remember we are having an MFL Spelling Bee in the Summer Term!

History Lessons

Students visited Brampton and enjoyed a walking tour to stir their interest and help gain an understanding of the history surrounding them. They learned that many buildings in Brampton have had a long and varied history and some have seen famous historical figures like Bonnie Prince Charlie actually stay in them. The historical skill of understanding change and continuity was certainly developed on our trip and consequent lessons. Year 7 are currently learning about the history of other local areas such as Whitehaven and our connection to the slave trade, local castles and the role of the 'Gretna Girls' during WW1.

RE Lessons

Year 7 have settled in really well in RE. They constantly ooze enthusiasm in every lesson. Their homework questions have been a huge hit, sparking lots of debate and discussion at the start of each lesson. Some debates have included: whether the fruit 'orange' came first, or the colour; what colour a zebra would be if you could take away its stripes; and what 3 things you would take with you to a desert island and why!

Extra-Curricular

It always amazes me how many opportunities our staff offer outside of the classroom. We pride ourselves in developing students' characteristics outside of school, so that they get a chance to experience other skills, make new friends and continue to strive to being the best they can be. I challenged the students to take part in as many clubs they could and they did not disappoint! Here is just a selection of what they have taken part in.

Drama Club

This year, we continue to offer Years 7 and 8 Drama Club, where students develop their performance skills learnt in lesson at a greater level. Mrs Buckley and Ms Lewis have been so impressed with the students' commitment so far. Each student has entered the drama studio with such enthusiasm. In Drama Club, there are many opportunities for students to perform, starting with our Christmas concerts where students will take part in choral speaking. This is a lovely event, one that we are excited to do with this year group.

Recently we were lucky enough to have a theatre company come to visit and deliver a session. Ex-student, now professional Director, Maya and Rae, who is a writer and actor from Close to Home Productions, put students through their paces in an exciting workshop learning about different ways to create characters.

LAMDA

LAMDA tuition has got off to a flying start this term. Ms Lewis, our LAMDA teacher, is delighted to welcome a new cohort of students, which includes nine Year 7 students. The students are all eagerly working towards Level 1 examinations in Solo Acting, which they will take at the end of January next year.

The opportunity to develop and enhance Drama skills by working towards LAMDA examinations is offered at William Howard School through our varied programme of peripatetic lessons. It is proving to be very popular amongst our students.

Choir

Choir is attended by students from all Year Groups and all abilities. We meet every Friday for biscuits and singing. We have just learnt how to sing *Shake it off* by Taylor Swift and are in the process of learning *Halo* by Beyoncé. Students have fun as well as being encouraged to perform at an excellent standard.

Rock Club

Years 7 and 8 Rock Club is led by Miss Maclachlan. Students meet after school on Thursdays to learn and perform together in various styles. They have already managed to perform a couple of pieces to an excellent standard. We are pleased by the way the Year Groups mix so positively.

Orchestra

Orchestra is also attended by students from all Year Groups and all abilities. They meet every Tuesday and are in the process of learning the accompaniment to this year's production *Little Shop of Horrors*, as well as some traditional music for example *Pomp and Circumstance* by Elgar. The atmosphere in orchestra is always fun as well as focussed and productive.

Musical Production

This year's School Production is *Little Shop of Horrors*. As a faculty, we were so impressed by all the students who came to audition for the main roles at the start of this year. The musical is cast and rehearsals are well underway including the orchestra and technical team who are making the plants! The performances will be on 7th, 8th, 9th February - we hope to see lots of you there to support our amazing young people in this strange and interesting musical!

Open Spaces

Ms Booker has been so impressed with the number of students that have shown an interest in the agricultural side of William Howard School.

Here at William Howard we have a beautiful outdoor area where students look after animals and help grow fruit and vegetables. At lunch time we saw an amazing 35 students attend, followed by 32 students afterschool!

Football Club

Over 30 Year 7 boys attend Football Club. We look forward to seeing how they demonstrate our core values as they train and play in matches next half term. Watch this space!

Panathlon North Cumbria Secondary Schools' Ten-Pin Bowling Challenge

Twelve excited Years 7 and 8 students headed off to Hollywood Bowl in Carlisle for the annual Panathlon North Cumbria Secondary Schools' Ten-Pin Bowling Challenge.

Twenty teams took over the venue for the morning, all having a wonderful time. Laughter and happy voices could be heard all around while they bowled.

Both WHS teams played brilliantly. They showed terrific team spirit, encouraging and congratulating one another, each time one of them scored a strike or spare.

Lexi Sherlock

Lexie competes in trampolining outside of school. Her recent success had her placed at 16th out of all regions in the UK! Well done Lexie for your commitment. We can't wait to hear more!

Riley Paisley

Riley travels around the UK as he competes for British Championship for motorbike racing on tarmac. Riley came 11th in his recent race. Keep it up Riley! We'd love to hear about your success.

Academic Excellence Shout Outs

At William Howard School, we celebrate the students who demonstrating being the best they can tynebe**.** In lessons, staff identify a student who have a positive work ethic, produced excellent work and excellent effort. Many staff have commented to me about how hard it has been to select only one student! Here we have a few shout outs from some subjects.

- **Drama Lessons:** Daniel Nixon, Josh Nixon, Isaac Higginbotham and Maya Higginbotham.
- **English Lesson:** Jessica Hellens, Phoebe Story and Elsa Watson
- **History Lessons:** Jacob Ayad, Tyne Hope and Ciara Steele.
- **PE Lessons -** Daniel Nixon, Joshua Nixon, Charlie Musgrave, Alfie Schollick, Harry Watt, Charlie Broatch and Dougie Garnett. Kayleigh Armstrong, Pearl Crotty, Eliza Fowkes, Ruby Hewson, Georgia Hodgson, Olivia MacGillivray, Lauren McLaughlin, Emily Potter
- **Spanish Lessons:** Phoenix Barker, Charlie Broatch, Joshua Dowson, Ollie Gardiner-McCracken, William Parr, Natalia Plazinska, Phoebe Story, Abigail Story and Elsa Watson.

An extra special shout out to the top three students who have received learner of the lesson the most:

- Phoebe Story - 16 times
- Isla Hodgson - 15 times
- Daniel Nixon - 15 times

Thank you

Finally, I would like to stay thank you to all the parents and carers of Year 7 students. Without your commitment, encouragement and resilience, the students would not be who they are today. I know that stepping up into secondary school can also be an anxious time for parents as well as students. I hope this newsletter has allowed you to see a snapshot of just how much the students are flourishing!

I also want to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to the Year 7 Student Manager, Miss Braithwaite. She has welcomed each and every student with open arms and helped them build their responsibility and, most of all, their resilience as they become Year 7s. We are both proud to be part of this fantastic Year Group.

I wish you all a lovely and well deserved half term break.

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