



Friday 3rd December 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

Here is our latest update about your school. Despite additional restrictions nationally, we are still injecting a little festive cheer into our lives in school as you can see from the first update on this letter.

Quick Read

- Christmas Jumper day is next Friday and we want as many students and staff to take part as possible - all in aid of a good cause. We've also put our Christmas decorations up in school, expertly helped by our students.
- A group of Y9s have taken part in an Aircraft Challenge this week, developing prototypes and building balsa wood crafts.
- Catering updates: don't forget we have a free breakfast service for students every day in school; we also have new furniture in the canteen as a response to student voice; and Christmas lunch will be served on the 8th or 15th depending on the student's year group.
- Our traditional end of term celebration assemblies will be taking place on the last day of term, and those students in school on the last day will be 'in it to win it' and eligible for a range of exciting prizes to be enjoyed by all the family.
- Y11 parents have two virtual events coming up: parents' evening and the parental support evening.
- Covid testing has just been announced for all students upon their return from the Christmas break. We are planning this now and there is more information below.
- We recommend a charity website with lots of tips on supporting your child with a range of issues from anxiety to sleep issues and more. See below for the link.
- Our Y10 boys' football team are faring well in the County Cup.
- As always, there are some important dates for your diary at the end of this letter.

Christmas is coming!

Don't forget, Christmas Jumper day is next Friday (10th December) in aid of Save the Children. We want as many of our students to take part as possible as it's about so much more than wearing a jumper: it is about supporting charity and doing something fun for people who may be less fortunate than ourselves. Students don't have to buy expensive jumpers: they can simply adorn one they already own with some festive items. Student leaders will be visiting forms for donations on the day. As mentioned in the introduction to this letter, we are also spreading a little decorative Christmas spirit in school and our Christmas trees have been put up this week. Students across the main school did a fantastic job decorating the one in the main hall, as you can see.





Aircraft Challenge

On Wednesday 1st December, 30 of our Y9 students had the opportunity to take part in an exciting new enrichment activity with the Smallpiece Trust in their #IAMSET programme. The students worked in teams to practically explore the physics of flight through concepts such as aerodynamics and forces in a thrilling Aircraft Challenge. The teams designed and built 3 prototype gliders using straws and card before building, testing and refining their prototype. Students evaluated their prototypes and used what they had learned to design a craft to be built from balsa wood with a motor and propeller.

Each team member had a role - team leader, finance manager, product design, electronics engineer, marketing manager and resource manager. They spent the afternoon creating their design and producing marketing materials to sell their aircraft. They then gave a presentation to the group about their aircrafts design features.



The busy day culminated in test flights of their aircraft and Team VBD (see photo) were crowned the overall winners for flight stability and collaborative teamwork throughout the day, well done!

Catering News

Since our return in September we have seen an increase in the number of students taking a school meal. We have a new serving area with seating for 64 in the old reception area, and we have also purchased new tables for The Canteen following feedback from students.

At the start of the year, we introduced a free breakfast service before school starts: this takes place in The Canteen, offering a selection of cereals, fruit and toast. This has really gained momentum; starting with just 1 student, we now see up to 30 students taking a breakfast, using the space to do some studies, or chilling with friends and listening to the radio before the day begins.

For lunches, we now purchase sandwiches from a local business Proper Tasty in Northallerton; these have proved very popular and allow us to comply with new labelling laws. In addition, the introduction of wooden cutlery, biodegradable take away cartons and food bags has substantially reduced the amount of plastic we use. After Christmas we will also be changing the products used for cleaning in the catering department to an eco-friendly range.

Finally, Christmas lunch will be served on the 8th and 15th December giving all our students the opportunity to purchase a festive meal.





Behaviour and Attendance Update

We are fast approaching our end of term celebration assemblies and for the second year running will be conducting our 'in it to win it' prize draw, where those students in school on the last day get the chance to run down to collect a prize, as we run a live stream into classrooms!

Our celebration assemblies take place at the end of every term. Students are recognised by their tutors through commendations for outstanding contributions to the school, their work, or for simply being a wonderful person. We also give awards to students for outstanding behaviour and attendance across the term.

Thanks to the generosity of our local businesses, we are able to give away some fabulous prizes; from vouchers to use in our local restaurants, family tickets to Stokesley Golf and even free car valeting. We would always welcome more prizes to give away: if you would like to donate a prize for our prize draws, please contact office@stokesleyschool.org.

Updates for parents of students in Y11

Y11 Parents' Evening is on Thursday 9th December and the Parental Support Evening follows this on Wednesday 15th December 2021

Mrs Darbyshire wrote to parents/carers in Y11 last week to detail the arrangements for both these events. Please ensure you book appointments to see your child's teachers to find out how they are performing across each subject.

We were planning on completing our parental support evening in person, but due to the government guidelines that were released at the weekend and local instructions from North Yorkshire County Council, this event will now be virtual. Thank you to those parents/carers who have already requested tickets, further information will follow next week.

Covid Testing

As you will know, we were informed last Friday by the government that we must test all students for Covid-19 once on their return to school after Christmas. We are currently preparing for this by: reviewing our stock; considering how we can staff the testing whilst also teaching lessons; and generally trying to make sure everything is in place before we break up. The testing will take place on the first two days students return to school and will be a quick and easy process using nasal swabs only. We thank you for supporting this effort by providing consent for your child, and encouraging them to take a home test the day before they return too.





Supporting you to support your child

We would like to signpost you to the website shown below, from charity Place2Be. It has a range of links aimed at providing support for parents on a range of different topics. Through the links, you can access support and advice on topics such as: sleep, peer pressure, reading, anxiety, body image and more.

https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/?utm_source=Sprint1&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=parenting-smart

Sporting News

Our Y10 boys' football team won 6-0 in the Quarter Finals of the County Cup this week against Norton in Malton. We'll keep you posted as to further progress!

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 8th December:	Y7, 10, 11 Christmas lunch
Thursday 9th December:	Y11 parents' evening (virtual)
Friday 10th December:	Christmas Jumper Day
Tuesday 14th December :	Deadline for donations to our foodbank appeal
Wednesday 15th December:	Y11 parental support evening (virtual)
Wednesday 15th December:	Y8, 9 Christmas lunch
Friday 17th December:	Term ends at 12.35pm
Wednesday 5th January:	Spring terms starts for all students

Yours faithfully,

Mrs H. L. Millett,
Headteacher

