



29th September 2023

Dear Parents / Carers,

As we approach the end of the first month of the academic year, there is already a great deal going on in our school - emphasised by the bumper edition of our letter this week. It was a delight to meet so many of you at our recent parent/carer after school events and we have also enjoyed getting to know our new students as they settle into secondary school. The start to term has seen our students collect the most house points for September in the school's history as part of our new positive conduct policy with 80,000 awarded as I write this message. We are incredibly proud of the effort that our young people have put into their work and their extra-curricular activities at the school. There is a huge amount for us to be proud of and we have made a fantastic start to the new school year!

Quick read

- Our immense offer of extra-curricular clubs and activities has launched!
- Student leaders have had leadership training this month, are on the fundraising trail again, and have been presented with their special honorary badges this morning.
- We've held four bespoke parent/carer events in the last two weeks, thank you for taking part and sharing such positive feedback.
- Sixth Form open evening for students thinking of joining us next year takes place at 5pm on Thursday 12th October.
- Y6 open evening takes place from 5pm on Thursday 5th October. Students in Y7-Y11 will finish at 2:15pm on this day.

Drama Studio

Following the news about our new drama studio in my last letter I am pleased to confirm that our building project will begin in October. Due to time limits for some Department for Education funds the construction will be taking place in both holiday time and term time. Efforts will be made to minimise the disruption to learning and site safety precautions will be in place to keep students away from areas where building is taking place. The new Drama Studio will provide a facility for us to be proud of and an area in which our students can thrive in their pursuit of the creative arts. We hope that construction will be finished by Easter but will update you further as the project gets underway.



Drama

A number of exciting events are coming your way in the coming weeks and months.

Firstly, KS4 Drama students have been offered the opportunity to attend a free workshop with award winning playwright and Stokesley Alum - Alistair McDowall. Hosted at The Globe Library Stokesley, this event will give students the opportunity to learn about life as a playwright and take part in creating drama from scratch. Some places are still available. Let Mrs Kent know if you know someone who would like a space.

Thursday 9th November will be the first drama performance of the year with students in Y9 and 10 taking to the stage to perform the plays 'Burying your brother in the pavement' by Jack Thorne and Two by Jim Cartwright. This year there will be nearly 60 students performing. This will be an assessed piece of work for both classes so it would be great to have a big supportive audience.

Finally, Stokesley School has been once again invited to perform at the Stokesley Christmas lights switch on. Taking place on the 1st of December our students will be providing the entertainment for the evening. We will be performing in front of the town hall from about 5:30pm and before heading up to the tree for 7pm for the big switch on. We have students from Y7-11 taking part and it should be a lovely festive start to December.

Arkwright Scholarships

Any Y11 student who is interested in a future career in engineering, a technical career, or a career in IT might think about applying for an Arkwright Scholarship. The application process this year will soon be open, if any Y11's are interested please contact Mrs Dent in DT and look at the website for more information: <https://www.arkwright.org.uk/>. Students will need to study at least one of the following A Levels at Stokesley School in the next academic year: Design Technology, IT, Maths or Physics to be eligible to apply. Support sessions will run every Tuesday lunchtime in 803 to guide students through the application process. This is a fabulous opportunity which our current Arkwright Scholar: Fraser Allen (Year 13) has taken full advantage of:

"My Arkwright scholarship has given me so many opportunities this last year. In October I formally received my award at the Institute of Engineering Technology, Savoy Place in London. Previous Arkwright alumni and industry representatives gave us talks and we got the chance to talk to many other future engineers and industry sponsors from across the country. Arkwright gave me a sponsor who I also got to meet in London. As part of the scholarship I received a mentor, my mentor is the founder of a project management firm specialising in major infrastructure in the utilities, rail and energy sectors. At the end of Y12 I was lucky enough to visit one of their offices in Redcar as their first ever student for work experience. I was able to talk to many employees in person and virtually and I gained a



much deeper understanding of infrastructure projects. Another part of my scholarship that I've been able to take advantage of is the financial reward I received. This has allowed me to cover fuel costs and train tickets to university open days at Loughborough, Leeds, Sheffield and Cambridge. All of these events have hugely helped me in my current university application and I'd recommend trying for the scholarship to anyone even vaguely interested in engineering."

<https://www.agilia.co.uk/agilia-news/the-arkwright-awards-2022-1>

Clubs and activities: the launch!

We're now in the exciting position of being ready to launch our clubs and activities booklet for this academic year. The booklet can be accessed [here](#), and is being shared with students in tutor time over the course of the next week. There is also a timetable of clubs and activities (accessible [here](#)) for students so that they can easily see what's on when. This will be displayed in form rooms and also around the school. We will be encouraging as many students as possible to attend a weekly club: the benefits are countless, and it also means that they can tick off a challenge on their **LIFE** passport!

Please support us by encouraging your child to attend a club. If you would like any more information about these clubs or what they involve, please don't hesitate to contact Mrs Fox (efox@stk.aretu.uk) who will be more than happy to help.

Personal development

It's been an exciting start to the term from a personal development perspective. The first few weeks have seen the launch of our new house system (and applications for House Captains!), the start of clubs, the introduction of extra-curricular pin badges and a visit from the NHS's Melissa Bus.

The House System

Students in all year groups have had assemblies from Mrs Fox introducing them to our new and exciting House System. Our house system has been developed and is shaped around 6 key missions:

- to foster a sense of community;
- to celebrate the successes of our students, in whatever guise they come;
- to provide opportunities for students to learn and develop leadership skills;
- to encourage healthy competition;
- to strengthen the link between the lower school and the sixth form;
- to allow for more opportunities for fun through a diverse range of activities.



As part of the House system, students work towards the glory of winning the House Cup each year, which they will all contribute to through earning House Points and taking part in activities and competitions throughout the year.

There are seven houses in school, and **all** staff and students now belong to one of these. The seven school houses are named after Greek Gods, and are as follows:



We have already appointed seven Senior House Captains in Year 13, and applications have just closed for the position of House Captains in Y12. Once all positions are filled, these student leaders will be able to start planning out the competitions and activities for the year ahead. Linked to this, the competition for the House Cup is already well underway, with students in all year groups working hard to earn House Points for their House.

At the end of the first week of term, the leaderboard looked like this:

- 1st - Demeter (5315 House Points)**
- 2nd - Hermes (4996 House Points)**
- 3rd - Artemis (4923 House Points)**
- 4th - Poseidon (4891 House Points)**
- 5th - Athena (4721 House Points)**
- 6th - Hera (4519 House Points)**
- 7th - Zeus (4240 House Points)**



Clubs and activities

Our clubs and activities officially started this week, with 40 members of staff offering their time voluntarily to give students opportunities above and beyond their curriculum subjects. It's been so great to see students - particularly our new year 7 students - getting involved with these activities, and great to see students in different year groups working so well together.

If your child is yet to join in with a club, please encourage them to do so. The benefits are endless for young people, and - more than anything - it's an amazing way for them to meet and spend time with like minded people. If you missed our clubs booklet and timetable being shared, then we have included links to them below for ease.

[Clubs Booklet](#)

[Clubs timetable](#)

Clubs and activities are co-ordinated by our Lead Practitioner for Personal Development, Mrs Fox. If you have any questions or comments or even suggestions, please feel free to get in touch with her at efox@stk.aretu.uk

Pin badges



Linked to the introduction of the clubs booklet is the introduction of extra-curricular pin badges. This is something that's new for this academic year, and came as a request from students as a way to celebrate the ways in which so many of our students contribute to the life of our school outside the classroom. Students can win pin badges for exceptional commitment to different areas of our extra-curricular school life, and there are a total of 9 to collect.

Red - sports

Green - sustainability

Purple - arts

Blue - communication

Yellow - excellence

Orange - representing the school

Brown - logic

Sparkly orange - competition winner

White - representing the county



Mrs Fox has loved having emails from parents whose children compete for the county (or sometimes country - impressive stuff) who have put names forward for white pin badges. If you think your child is a worthy recipient of a county pin badge, please don't hesitate to get in touch with her at the email address above. Pin badges will be handed out in House Assemblies at the end of each term.

The NHS Melissa Bus

We were incredibly lucky to have the NHS's Melissa Bus visit the school last week, giving students in Y11 and the Sixth Form the opportunity to ask questions about careers in the NHS, and to explore different options. Students were able to talk to NHS employees from a range of different careers and to explore the pathways available to them.

It was also great to find out that one of the employees on the bus was an ex-student of ours who had specifically requested to take part in this event!

If you have any questions about careers in school or specific requests about your own child, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Miss Stirling, our Careers Advisor on mstirling@stk.arete.uk.



Coming up in Personal Development

Wednesday 4th October - BBC Bitesize are visiting school and delivering workshops

Tuesday 10th October - Gangline are in school delivering workshops to students

Monday 16th October - The British Heart Foundation's Restart a Heart day will see all of year 8 learning CPR with local paramedics and police officers in school.



Parental journey and stepping up events

We would like to thank parents/carers for attending our events over the last two weeks. Mrs Darbyshire and the extended senior leadership team have hosted four events in the last two weeks. These are new events to our calendar as part of our parental journey from Y7-13. The first two were for KS5 to support parents/carers whose children are in Y12 at our 'Stepping into KS5' and then for parents of children in Y13 who are making their plans to apply to university and apprenticeships. Last week, we welcomed our Y7 parents/carers to receive advice and guidance on supporting their child as they 'step into KS3' which was followed by a tour around the school, where our Y7 students loved showing off their school and the classrooms they are taught in. Finally, we hosted our 'Stepping into KS4' event for our Y10 parents/carers. We are thrilled that 100% of all parents/carers who attended the events and have completed the feedback form felt the events were informative and helpful.

Year 12

Our new year 12 students have settled in well and are getting into the swing of studying A Levels now.

Students may find the work starting to build up a little now. It is important they use their planners to not only record work to be done, but plan to use their time effectively too - habits we encourage in tutor time. If you are worried or concerned about anything please do not hesitate to contact us using sixthform@stokesleyschool.org.

Sixth form open evening

Our sixth form open evening takes place on the evening of Thursday 12th October, starting at 5pm with a talk from Mr Fenwick and Dr. Reed and followed by the opportunity to learn more from subject teachers about our sixth form courses. Our updated prospectus will be available shortly, and will also be available as an interactive document on our website with links to videos built in. We look forward to seeing our year 11 students and their families at the event in a few weeks time. Furthermore, if you know a year 11 in another school who is considering their post-16 options, we are very happy to welcome them too!

Y6 open evening and early finish for Y7-Y13

Our Y6 open evening takes place on Thursday 5th October. There will be a talk at 5.15pm in the main hall, which will also be repeated at 6:30pm. In between talks and up to 8pm, parents, carers and prospective students can walk around our school learning more about the different subjects and joining in with interactive activities. Students in Y7-Y13 will finish at 2:15pm to allow the site team the opportunity to prepare for the evening event. The bus companies have been informed.



Dates for your diary

5th October

Y6 – Y7 Open Evening: 5 – 8.00pm

Students finish at 2.15pm

6th October

PD Day

12th October

Sixth Form Open Evening: 5 – 7.00pm

27th October

School breaks up for October Half Term.

Yours faithfully,

Mr M Fenwick

Headteacher