

Newsletter



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Headmaster's Welcome

On the one hand and given the current crisis that consumes most of our energy, thought and worry, it may seem rather trivial to reflect on the contents of this newsletter but, in fact, my sense is that it's all the more important to remind ourselves of the strengths, values and opportunities that a Yarm School education provides. I celebrate the achievements of our Yarm Apprentice teams and congratulate all competitors in this year's House Chess competition. I am proud of our engagement with issues of faith and society as described by Noah below; the thoughtful engagement of our pupils with ideas and ideals demonstrates the questioning, confident and articulate learners that we encourage and develop.

We can also congratulate the Rockschool stars who achieved highly in their musical exploits and, in our final sporting fixtures of the year - not that we knew it then - we read about skill, resilience, determination and the camaraderie of a team held together by friendships and trust. We should cherish these aspects of our School life, perhaps all the more given the period of uncertainty that we enter, and the change and transition that we all face after the Prime Minister announced that Schools were to close until further notice at the end of the day today; what an extraordinary thing to write in a school newsletter.

I am sad to have been away from school for these last few days because my family has needed to self-isolate. We are all fine, I think, and I'm grateful for the good wishes I've received. Working from home - particularly given the rollercoaster the school has been on this week - has underlined for me the challenges to come for parents, but has particularly highlighted the profound changes to their daily lives that pupils will face. We must all support the pupils as they adjust to these new challenges and recognise that there will be bumps in the road. My colleagues will provide a continuity of experience, even though there is a change in setting, and this educational routine and engagement will be a critical part of the pupils' wellbeing. As we pivot our efforts to support the pupils remotely, staff will also need to show resilience and creativity and I have every faith in my colleagues' ability, professionalism and in their determination to ensure that the pupils receive a high quality and enriching education.

There is no doubt that Yarm School has a strong and cohesive community and I will work tirelessly to support the School and every member of our community through the days, weeks and months to come. I wish all of our pupils, parents, staff, Governors and their families and loved ones the very best and sincerely hope that everyone stays positive, stays healthy and well, and looks after each other.

Dr Huw Williams

Discussions 'in good faith'

Last Friday the Right Reverend Bishop of Sheffield, Reverend Andy Poultney, Reverend Fiona Double and Reverend Canon John Ford met with the Fifth Year Religious Studies GCSE to discuss all things Christianity. It presented an unmissable opportunity for us - the students - to ask questions about the Christian part of our course to undoubtedly some of the best people to ask in the whole area! We certainly did not hold back with the questions - "What is the difference between Liturgical and Non-Liturgical worship?" (from Jemma-Jane Wood) and "What does the Holy Trinity mean?" (from Abi Goodchild-Maguire). Everyone sat around in a circle of chairs and the lesson began with personal introductions from the individual guests; each told their own uniquely fascinating stories about their experiences of Christianity and why they believe in God. Then, they handed it over to me and my peers. However, for the most part of the lesson, we were simply sat in awe listening to these fountains of wisdom answer our questions. The experience not only helped us with our understandings of the Christianity element of our GCSE course, but additionally enhanced our views of the Christian faith as a whole. It was refreshing to be in the presence of such devout and knowledgeable believers of the faith we have been studying for the past two years. Eventually our teacher, Miss Sophie Hussey, reluctantly had to bring the session to a close - every single one of us left the classroom wishing it had lasted longer!

Noah Bickenson



Towards a better understanding of human rights in China

Think of China and many of us might conjure up images of mist covered landscapes and that snaking Great Wall of China, Summer and Winter Palaces and the Forbidden Palace of

Beijing – something akin to an open air museum. Others may think of those innumerable cities springing up across the country, populated by glassy sky scrapers and what most of us would call a capitalist landscape. Latterly we have been made aware of China as the epicentre of the Coronavirus outbreak. It would be an earlier generation who may still think of that lone carrier-bag bearing protester defiantly confronting that tank in Tiananmen Square.



Our guest on Friday was a human rights defender from China who has a great deal of experience and exposure to the repressive measures being employed by the Chinese state. In particular she addressed the way in which young defenders have been confronted by the state apparatus. We were presented with several significant cases of individuals and their families who were harassed, questioned, arrested, sentenced and imprisoned for activities deemed detrimental to China, or in the legal phrasing of many convictions, for 'picking quarrels and provoking trouble'. One such couple did little more than use the internet to document the prevalence of protests within China. Unfortunately the measures enacted have been more severe than disproportionate sentences for activities that would be far from criminal in most countries. Arrested or detained individuals have died in custody or prison, with woefully inadequate explanations given for these tragic circumstances.

Our speaker spoke passionately against the notion that human rights were a 'western, European' construct and that to push for them in China was akin to an act of neo-colonialism. She rather claimed that it was almost innate to humans to want to improve their lives and circumstances and wish for the protection and well-being of their family members. She also rejected notions that Chinese citizens desired strong, autocratic leadership; rather there is a deep-seated, albeit silenced voice or appetite for fair and reasonable freedoms, enshrined by an accountable system of leadership. The safety and security of our guest was undeniably precarious. Given the enormity of the challenge it was understandable, if a touch withering, that her ambition was to 'record' and 'publicise' the human rights violations. This is a modest level of outcome that we have heard repeatedly from others defenders in countries where the possibilities for change were so low. This in itself should give us all significant pause for thought when we think of China.

Mr S Edwards

A-B-C, easy as 1-2-3

The final Boardroom for the last task, saw Philippa and Pranav go head-to-head to pitch their prototype EYFS Maths books. With Lord Sugar (Mrs Speight) only able to give a cursory inspection of the books before being called away on urgent business, Miss Rhodes was obliged to step into the role.

Philippa's team were first to pitch and gave an excellent presentation explaining their book concept, "Planet Zoo", which comprised of maths questions based on an animal story which also promoted inclusivity and core British values for children. Making extensive reference to their very thorough market research, their book addressed shape, space and counting in an interesting and appealing way.

Next to pitch were Team Fromage (Pranav's team), who presented their book, "Danny's Maths Adventure". This was a problem solving and reasoning book which fitted well with current primary maths requirements.

Both teams were commended for their efforts and praised for the quality of their hand drawings, but only one team could be victorious and it was felt that Philippa's book was more visually appealing and could also be directly rolled out as a task for independent work for EYFS children. Whilst the winning team enjoyed juice and muffins, Pranav brought back Hugh and Bea into the Boardroom and after a tense session Pranav was fired.

We are very grateful to Mrs Speight for setting such an interesting and real-life based task, and for allowing our students access to pupils and staff at the Pre-Prep for market research in recent weeks.

Bonus points were awarded to Philippa as PM of the winning team, whilst Miss Rhodes and Mr Menzies commended both Izzy D and Natalie for their considerable efforts on this task. Bonus peer points went to Pranav, Issy L and Philippa.

With just a plenary session remaining we are very close to knowing who will be the 2020 Yarm Apprentice.

Miss C E Rhodes

House Chess

House Chess for 2020 has reached its exciting completion with some splendid attacking chess. Last week the Third/Fourth place match finished in an exciting draw - 3-3 - with Aidan and Bede sharing the spoils.

This week the Cuthbert steamroller continued its inexorable passage with a fitting victory 4-2 over Oswald. The gallant runners-up did, however, show their mettle with victories for Yusuf Syed and Ajay Selvan. Cuthbert were just too strong with impressive victories from the Sathyamurthy brothers, Tom Hall and Edward Adams.

House Chess, now in its second year, is proving a welcome addition to Yarm School's chess calendar. And again it is Cuthbert's name that will be engraved on the shield, maintaining their position on the pedestal.

Mr Rye & Mr Pointon

Rockschool Exams

Many congratulations to those who undertook their Rockschoool exam on Saturday 7th March.

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| Danny Dexter | Grade 1 Drums | Distinction |
| Evie Stoker | Grade 2 Drums | Distinction |
| William Jeavons | Grade 2 Bass Guitar | Distinction |
| Aidan Munro | Grade 2 Guitar | Distinction |
| Cordelia Deering | Grade 2 Drums | Distinction |
| James Heward | Grade 2 Drums | Merit |
| Frankie Parker | Grade 2 Drums | Distinction |
| Henry Bottomley | Grade 3 Drums | Merit |
| Gaurav Kannan | Grade 4 Drums | Merit |
| Samuel Shawcross | Grade 4 Drums | Merit |

Hockey



National Quarter Final

Sandbach School v Yarm 2-2 (Sandbach win on flicks)

The Second Year boys travelled to Sandbach School near Crewe to play their quarter final National Schools' Cup game. The 3-hour journey led to a slow start from Yarm as a stronger/physical Sandbach team forced a goal over the line from their first short corner - a shot was saved by goal keeper Zach Parker but their striker was first to pounce on the rebound and forced a close range shot home despite the best efforts of Finn Davie.

Yarm reacted well to get back into the game, Will Ferguson ran the full length of the pitch dribbling past several players before rounding the keeper and putting the ball into an empty net. This was quickly followed by a well-executed short corner routine which was driven home by James McGee to give Yarm the lead. The game should have been secured by half-time but we had missed chances. Timmy Foley missed a close range effort followed by a 3-on-1 against the Sandbach keeper in which Yarm failed to finish.

Unfortunately Sandbach came back strongly second half and eventually secured an equaliser with 4 minutes to go. Yarm almost stole the game with the last touch through a short corner but this was well saved by the Sandbach keeper. As the game went to flicks, it was the home team who were victorious but the Sandbach staff were very complimentary of the Yarm boys stating it was their toughest game to date. Unfortunately, the team will not compete at the North Finals this week because of the coronavirus- it is hoped this will get

rearranged when we return after the Easter break. The team has worked very hard this year to get to this level and should be proud of the level they have reached.

U14 North of England Finals

Yarm 1 v 0 St Peter's

Yarm 1 v 1 Altrincham Grammar

Yarm 0 v 3 King's School Chester

This was a case of missed opportunity for Yarm in a tournament where we expected to do well. The prize was a place at the National Finals at the Olympic Park in London after Easter.

The first match was a one sided affair that really should have produced a number of goals given the pressure the boys created. Whilst the St Peter's keeper produced a good performance and their boys showed great determination- Yarm were disappointed they only scored one through Junior Newton after a set up from Will Ferguson close to the goal. It wasn't that the boys weren't creating good chances- it was just sloppy finishing and quite often from close range.

We started the second game against Altrincham strongly and after an early goal from Charlie Thompson, it looked like a case of not whether Yarm would win but really how many they would win by! However, things unravelled after a poor 5 minute spell led to a free hit conceded by Newton in the Yarm 25, he hadn't heard the umpire and carried on playing which led to a harsh 2 minute suspension and a short corner to the opposition. Unfortunately, this was the key moment of the tournament as Yarm stepped up a few gears and created numerous chances but just couldn't get past the outstanding Altrincham keeper.

This now meant we had to beat King's, if we had snatched a win against Altrincham then a draw would have been enough in this game. This changed the tactical set up as Yarm had to press for goals from the outset often committing more players forward than we would normally like. This left us open to counter-attacks and after a well worked short corner from King's to take the lead, we went with 3 at the back (now requiring 2 goals) which left us even more exposed. After conceding 2 more goals the game was well and truly up!

This was very disappointing to all concerned- this group have really committed this year and have played plenty of matches and trained well. It is a mark of how far hockey has come at this school that we are genuinely gutted not to qualify but the boys will be motivated to go further in future tournaments!

U12 North of England Finals

King's Chester 2 v 3 Yarm

Yarm 2 v 0 Calday Grange

Yarm 4 v 0 Hallcross

Yarm 2 v 0 King's Chester



SPORT

Hockey (Continued)

We travelled to King's School, Macclesfield to compete in the U12 North of England Championships. After winning the North East section a couple of weeks earlier the Yarm boys were optimistic about their chances.

The first game was against the hosts who looked like a well drilled outfit and after an early opposition goal, things were looking bleak. To their credit, our First Year boys went up about 5 gears and man of the match Cameron Morrison scored 3 fantastic goals to give us a 3-1 lead. King's did come back to score another but the boys held on to a 3-2 victory. We were now in the driving seat in the group and the 2nd game against Calday saw another outstanding performance with a strong 2-0 win. This was quickly followed with a 4-0 defeat of Hallcross but they had lost their best player due to an injury.

The boys now had the opportunity to get revenge for the U14 team as they took on a very strong King's Chester in the final. The opposition had been scoring for fun in their previous games and were able to boast a number of very athletic boys. The game plan was a half court press and squeeze space to frustrate. This worked a treat as Finlay Cook forced home an early lead before the Yarm team worked their socks off to tackle, break up and generally get in the way. Defenders Jake Leader and Sam Arnold were impressive throughout but keeper Harry Carter was man of the match as he made a number of amazing saves! Yarm broke away with a few minutes to go with Cameron Morrison finishing an 'argie' in the top corner from close range the game and the title was won!

This was a great effort from the First Year - a team that shows great promise. It was an excellent way to finish the boys hockey season (given that all games are now suspended).

Other Results

We were able to give a lot more boys a game in matches v RGS this weekend- results are...

Under 12A- RGS 4 v 1 Yarm
 Under 12 B- RGS 2 v 0 Yarm
 Under 13A- Yarm 3 v 3 RGS
 Under 13B- Yarm 0 v 2 RGS
 Under 14- RGS 0 v 9 Yarm
 Under 15- RGS 0 v 10 Yarm

Keep up to date on social media



YARM SCHOOL NETBALL TEAM OF THE WEEK

9TH - 14TH MARCH 2020

