

Newsletter



No: 1250 www.yarmschool.org | 2nd October 2020

Headmaster's Welcome

The theme of this term's whole school (virtual) assemblies is adventure, and we have recently heard from Mr Boddy on 'an adventurous life', Mr Bridges on adventures of the mind in the role playing game Dungeons and Dragons and Mr Yates on his summer cross country adventure on a mountain bike. This edition of the newsletter shows some of our pupils emulating these exploits and engaging in their own adventures on the sports' field, on two wheels, in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and with their engagement with intellectual and literary ideas. We read of opportunities for experience in journalism for the Lower Sixth and the chance to learn about the adventure that is a career in varied roles within the health professions.

Parents will have seen the letter about face coverings following further changes to the local restrictions in areas where large numbers of our pupils travel into school. This was not a decision that we took lightly and I am grateful for the support and understanding of pupils and parents as we adjust to these new measures.

Schools speak a lot about developing character in their pupils and I am clear that building a sense of the 'right thing to do' with respect to others is a critical part of our role as teachers. It is clear that our pupils share a strong sense of respect for each other and that they develop and refine their sense of shared responsibility to uphold our expectations of them in this regard. It is heartening, with that in mind, to read Mr Morrison's account of sportsmanship and fairness on the rugby pitch and is, I think, a reflection of the values we develop in all our pupils.

Dr Huw Williams

First Year Mountain Biking

On Sunday, 27th September twelve hardy First Year pupils trekked up to school to get ready for a biking adventure. We boarded the bus with our masks on and put on a pair of headphones ready for the journey to Sutton Bank where we picked up our rented mountain bikes.

From the shop we headed out on our bikes around the skills loop. For some of us, it was the first time cycling on a mountain bike. We slowly played with our bikes and figured out the gears and how to use our brakes. We then did a time trial competition around the loop, where everyone got under 1 min 20 seconds.

After this we had a bite to eat and hopped on to our bikes for a long ride of the blue loop. We passed the pump track and headed out over the banks and fields. After stopping at some shelter, we finished our lunch and headed back on the ride. We set down some hills and unfortunately, according to one of Newton's laws of motion, anything that goes down must go up, meaning we had some steep hills to climb. This is where Mr Mathers introduced the Chompianship. Anyone who could cycle up the hill without pushing their bikes would win a Chomp bar. In the end we had four Chompians. After the ride we split into two groups, some going to the cafe and some going to the pump track that we passed earlier. The pump track was really fun as there was no need to pedal and when riding you felt like a BMX rider with all the humps and turns. We returned the bikes and sat tiredly on the bus all the way back to school where we were picked up by our parents. This was a lovely new experience and I recommend everyone to have a try!

Shlok Arcot (First Year)



Christmas Chess Tournament

This year we will hold the Christmas Tournament, but we will use Lichess. If you would like to play:

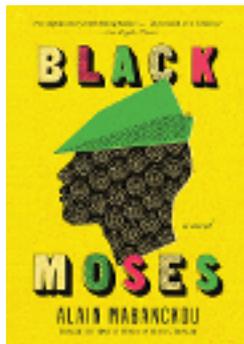
1. Set up an account on Lichess (lichess.org)
2. Email Mr Pointon (mip@yarmschool.org) with your name and Lichess username
3. Do this before Friday 9th October.

Book Review

Over the forthcoming weeks members of the school Politics Society in Upper and Lower Sixth will be sharing some of their wider reading with you in the form of a series of book reviews. The chosen works are varied and range from classic political texts to works that are perhaps tangentially political in their subject or contents. We hope you might find in these reviews something that piques your own interest.

Mr S Edwards

Black Moses: Alain Mabanckou
"The larger-than-life story of an African Oliver Twist who thinks he's Robin Hood"



In 1970 Congo, a Marxist-Leninist revolution is about to sweep through the nation and for young Moses his whole life is about to be shaken to its core. An inmate at an orphanage on the outskirts of Pointe-Noire, the eponymous narrator's formative years are punctuated by loss. The revolution allows the orphanage's director Dieudonné to become a tyrant, appointing family as brutish wardens and punishing all those who disagree with him or the new political regime. Escaping his prison-like home, and guiltily leaving his best friend Bonaventure behind, Moses turns to a life as a petty thief, surviving on dog and cat meat and sleeping rough on the streets of Pointe-Noire. Having found refuge in a brothel following a mayoral drive to rid the Grand Marché of "mosquitoes", the authorities once again destroy his hard-fought peace. Losing all grip on reality, the accumulation of loss sends Moses, now nearly 40, into madness.

Alain Mabanckou dedicated his novel to all those "wanderers of the Côte Sauvage" and the fictionalised autobiography has many humorous moments. The humour, however, has an undertone of grief and outrage as we are brought on the painful journey of our tragic hero. The book itself isn't long and Mabanckou unfolds the narrative with urgency, gliding from one moving moment to another. I have read the book twice now, and both times I haven't been able to put it down so I would highly recommend it to anyone who loves fiction, but especially those who have an interest in politics and psychology.

Jonathan Oakley
 (Upper Sixth Politics student)

Interested in being a student advocate for the FT?

News has just been released of an exciting opportunity for students in Lower Sixth. We are able to nominate a student who would like to become a Student Advocate for the newspaper. To learn more about this role follow [this link](#) or email se@yarmschool.org.

You will need to be nominated for this process so it is essential that you express your interest to Mr S Edwards.



Bronze DofE News

Members of our Fourth Year, Fifth Year and Sixth Form have been productive in recent months with activities for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Anissa Sulthana and Josh McGeary have been heavily involved in rowing to complete their Physical section over several months and both Emily Dunn and James Waine have used their musical talents to successfully satisfy the requirements for the Skills section through Piano and Tees Valley Orchestra commitments respectively. Amelia Severn has played tennis to finish her Physical section and most recently, Keya Shah has fulfilled her Skills section through composing music. Well done to all - it is rather impressive the number of youngsters who dedicate their time to such a variety of interests.

All pupils in the current Fourth Year, Fifth Year and Sixth Form who have enrolled on the scheme should be adding evidence to their Duke of Edinburgh account.

Mrs Guest is now responsible for overseeing the whole Duke of Edinburgh's Award at Yarm School so please be proactive in seeking her advice for any section. Expeditions are, for now, on hold due to national restrictions, but a special 2020 Certificate of Achievement is still available for all participants to aspire to, at both Bronze and Gold level when all other sections are fulfilled.

Tell me more, tell me more...

Do you study, or are you interested in, Economics or Business? Are you in the Upper Sixth? Are you interested in real-world problems and finding real-world solutions? Do you want to find out more about how different economies work around the world? Then the Eco Soc is for you. We meet every Thursday lunchtime at 1, in B1, to discuss current economic affairs going on in the world. For more information speak to Jamie Pender (Chair of the Eco Soc), or Miss Rhodes.

Please note at present this group is for the Upper Sixth only, we are hoping to start a similar group for the Lower Sixth very soon!

Miss C E Rhodes

Online Uniform Collection arrangements

First let me take this opportunity to thank parents for their patience with regard to the delays in the stock arriving both during the holidays and into the new term.

We will be emailing parents when items are ready for collection, and we ask that they remind their child to collect items from the Uniform Shop (ideally at the lunch break).

Collection times are Monday to Thursday 1.00-4.30. Parents can also collect between these times if preferred, please follow the additional COVID hygiene measures as detailed at the shop entrance.

Please check your emails for notifications received over the last few days as we have lots of items in the Uniform Shop ready to be collected, many thanks.

Ms C Henderson

Time to think of a Gap Year?

In the lead up to this year of university admissions it was felt by many that there would be a significant increase in deferrals, with students opting to



'wait it out' and put off university until 2021. This prediction was considerably overestimated, with only a 4% increase in deferrals. Of course events conspired against some students, requiring them to take a year out before their course would be available, with others positively opting for this route. It remains to be seen if the extra intake offered by universities this year will require a clawing back for 2021 entry, making the idea of gap year an enviable and sensible option for some current applicants.

Taking a gap year now, with travel restrictions in place, may look less attractive than in previous years, but by next year we might expect a relaxation at least to some extent.

Besides, a gap year does not need to include exotic travel, and can be based around a home country, developing skills and experiences that will yield dividends in the future.

Recent research on the educational and career benefit reports very favourably on the value of gap years, in terms of leadership positions at university and beyond, the qualification of final degrees, as well as individuals' self-reported outcomes:

98% believed it made them a better person and provided time for self-reflection

84% reported they had learned skills that helped them become successful in their careers

73% said the gap year improved their readiness for university

So whether you are finding yourself on the salt flats of Bolivia, learning a new language online, stacking shelves to save for future study, volunteering in a local community project, or gaining professional work experience in industry, the choices for a gap year are many and varied even in these less certain times.

Mr S Edwards

Girls' Hockey

From the 12th-26th September First to Fourth Year girls have been attending hockey training on a Saturday morning. First Year pupils have been working on their positioning and passing through game play. Second Year pupils have focused on improving their shooting and passing skills. Third Years have significantly improved on their advanced skills i.e. aerials and reverse stick hits. The girls in Fourth Year have continued to develop their decision making skills both in attack and defense.

Thank you to all the staff who have run these sessions and well done to all girls, an excellent effort from all involved. 10th October will be a Netball Saturday, girls keep an eye out for the team sheets.

Forthcoming Career Cluster event: Health Professions

I am delighted to announce our next Career Cluster event, focusing on the broad, dynamic and essential field of Health



Professions. The event will take place on the

evening of **Thursday 12th November** and will be a 'remote' event utilizing the Zoom webinar platform.

The event is designed to explore the diversity of careers available within the health professions, as well as provide advice about suitable skills and aptitudes, routes for progression, including offering insights into the reality of many of these professions.

The event will consist of a number of on screen presentations from external guests, who will be happy to answer the questions that you submit during their presentations. We will hear from those currently in training in various careers, people working in the fields of medicine, physiotherapy, optometry, veterinary medicine, midwifery and nursing, as well as from individuals responsible for selecting individuals onto related courses, or delivering the training and education. It will be a rare and valuable opportunity to learn from and question so many in a single forum.

This week I will be emailing all parents with pupils in year groups from the Fourth Year to the Upper Sixth inviting them to this event. Please do share the information about this opportunity with other family members and friends beyond the Yarm School community.

Mr S Edwards

The true art of Sportsmanship

"Good sportsmanship encompasses many aspects of a character, the most fundamental being respect."

During the second round of the U13 Yarm Aurora Rugby contest last Saturday, a member of the Rebel Reds was advancing up the wing. He side-stepped his defender, but then noticed that he still had one man to beat, he chipped ahead and set off after the ball. The ball bounced into the goal area and bobbled towards the dead ball line. At that point, the referee was unsighted as the defender formed a screen in between the ball and the advancing attacking player. Both players then dived on top of the ball, propelling it over the dead ball line. The referee blew the whistle and explained that as he could not see a clear grounding from the attacking player he could not give the try. He assumed that both players grounded the ball at the same time, therefore the laws of the game would dictate that it was an attacking scrum, or free pass in this case, to the Rebel Reds. At that point, the defending member of the Phoenix Blues turned to the referee and said; "it's ok sir, he got there first and grounded the ball, it's a try". This was a class act, a true act of sportsmanship.

The concept of sportsmanship has been in the news recently for perhaps the wrong reasons. If we look at the example of

the Australian cricket team using sandpaper to ball tamper in the series against South Africa in 2010. Earlier this year Saracens rugby club were accused of breaching the Premiership salary cap to attract better players and going on to win various trophies as a result. Furthermore, we are often exposed to Premier League football managers ranting in post match interviews and openly criticising match officials, rather than accepting defeat in a fair, honest and graceful way.

There are innumerable parallels between what it takes to be successful both in life and on the sports field. Good sportsmanship on the field can reflect character off it. A good sport plays with integrity. A win that does not come fair holds no satisfaction. They applaud their opponents gracefully and congratulate them in victory. They wish to see their teammates participate and enjoy the game to the same level as they do. In summary, the qualities that make a good sport make a good person.

Mr A J Morrison

Rebels fight back

Round 2 of Super Rugby Yarmearoa once again saw some very tightly contested matches between evenly matched teams. After round 1 the Phoenix Blues held a slender 3-2 aggregate lead but all was about to change...

In the closest set of matches so far, it was tries galore as the boys showed off some superb attacking intent, identifying space, deft handling and pace on the ball. Once again there was great involvement from all those who took part and it was good to see everyone enjoying themselves with their teammates.

Many games went right down to the wire and indeed the very last play and it's fantastic that the boys are really buying into this competition, the ethos of teams and unity. Added to this, it's clear just how much their skills, game understanding and decision making are improving.

U12 - 26-23 (Rebel Reds)

U13 - 12-12

U14 - 25-25

U15 - 11-9 (Rebel Reds)

U16 - 18-17 (Rebel Reds)

Aggregate score after 2 Rounds;
Rebel Reds 6-4 Phoenix Blues

Round 3 - Sat Oct 3rd

Final Round - Sat Oct 10th



Club link practices at Yarm School



**Photos taken before social distancing

U10&U11 Tuesday, 5:30-6:30

U12, U13&U14 Wednesday, 5:30-6:30

Stokesley Ladies Hockey Club