

Newsletter



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Headmaster's Welcome

As we return to School after a welcome half term break, it has been lovely to see the pupils immerse themselves in their busy routines once again. Global events bring into sharp perspective the privilege of being able to attend school without fear, and as part of a cohesive and supportive community. This term's Monday assemblies have a new theme - e pluribus unum - out of many, one, and Mr Boddy introduced this by reflecting on the meaning and origins of the phrase, as well as considering how current international efforts demonstrate the collective efforts of many nations towards the shared goal of supporting those who are suffering. In our assemblies on Wednesday and Thursday, Mr Taylor's Tutor Group gave a fascinating talk on 'Ethics and Morals', and then Dr Perry's Tutor Group spoke about 'The Commonwealth'. Both assemblies explored thought provoking themes and issues that echoed some of the challenges faced by the world at present. Our collective thoughts go to all those who are suffering in conflict.

The newsletter contains much that will be of interest to pupils and parents alike. I am often struck by the quality of speakers who attend the School, and the Politics Society's guests this term - described within - are a stunning list of senior civil servants, academics and others who offer national and international perspectives. I would urge as many pupils as possible to take advantage of the fantastic opportunity to broaden their perspectives and to learn from such distinguished guests. Similarly, I hope many of our older pupils (and some parents) will take the opportunity to support their peers in the Lower Sixth Play, which promises to be a challenging, thought provoking and immersive experience as the cast perform 'in the round' in the Studio Theatre next week.

It is lovely to read of literary and creative engagement from our pupils - book reviews, theatre trips, world book day events, fashion show opportunities and more. Parents and pupils should also book tickets for two forthcoming concerts, with details below, as we look forward with excitement and anticipation to the joy of live music and performance once again. In sport, we celebrate individual success in hockey, football and table tennis, and many admirable team performances in hockey, netball and rugby sevens. This year has already been an outstanding success for the school in sport, and the pupils continue to deliver with success and, importantly, with team spirit and a shared endeavour and enjoyment of participation and competition.

Dr Huw Williams

Literary Tea and NT Live Streaming of 'The Book of Dust'



On the last Thursday before half term, several pupils from across the year groups met together, eclectically dressed, and made their way to Strickland & Holt for a private literary tea. From there, we all enjoyed a meal of: scones, sandwiches, crisps, brownies and cupcakes. After we had all consumed our fill, we returned to school to enjoy the National Theatre's live streaming of '*The Book of Dust, La Belle Sauvage*' and interviews with the creatives behind the production.

Everyone was left enthralled by the tale of a boy; girl; baby; calamitous flood and an incredible, small vessel. The special effects were captivating and the entire atmosphere of the theatre was conveyed through the screen.

As a party, we had been encouraged to dress up inspired by the theme of 'Northern Lights' and there were many exceptional outfits on display. For example, we had a witch, a whole army of polar bears, as too, the actual Northern Lights! All the students (and teachers) involved had an immersive and fun evening- something we will definitely remember.

Bee and Elsa Williams, First and Third Year

University and Apprenticeship Events

At this time of year universities and other organisations are keen to promote various offerings in the form of free remote seminars. They are typically targeted at students and parents and simply require a registration to attend. The events can be enormously insightful in providing information on the nature of the courses being offered and tend to have various individuals sharing their experiences.

In [this link](#) you will find details of a UK University and Apprenticeship Search event in the form of a virtual fair, as well as details of a forthcoming Meet the Russell Group virtual experience, with all university members of the Russell Group in attendance. Students will also in due course be keen to visit institutions in person, as this is a valuable part of the process, but these virtual events can be a useful shortcut to glean a good deal of initial information, advice and guidance.

Mr S Edwards



Tax Revenue v Costs to Society

The Economics and Business Society met for the last time before half term, to hear Will and Benji (accompanied by footage from Deacon who was unable to attend in person) evaluate the arguments for legalising marijuana. A Sixth Form audience attracted by an extremely controversial topic were introduced to the breadth of arguments relating to government tax revenue from a good with price inelastic demand, the cost implications for the NHS, the requirements for and feasibility of regulation, and issues associated with myopia but also negative externalities. Pertinent and thought provoking questions were raised to challenge the presenters.

Thank you to Will, Benji and Deacon for demonstrating how real and relevant Economics and Business really are.

Miss C Rhodes

Politics Society Introduces Diverse and Engaging Spring Term Programme

The Politics Society meets every Friday lunchtime and is an opportunity for students to gain a wider understanding and appreciation of issues of local, national and global significance. We meet with a diverse range of figures from the world of politics. Pupils from all years groups are welcome to attend and we mostly gather in the Friarage Theatre. Below you can read some of this Half Term's guests and events.

Mr S Edwards

Week 1	4th March 12:45 - FT	Marwa Ali Mahmoud Egyptian Human Rights defender <i>'LGBTQ+: The measuring of injustice'</i>
Week 2	11th March 12:45 - FT	Professor Thom Brooks Academic, author, columnist, policy advisor Director of the Labour Academic Network Professor of Law and Government, Durham Law School, Durham University <i>'Shaping the intellectual heart of the Labour Party'</i>
Week 3	18th March 12:45 - FT	Valentina Feklyunina Senior Lecturer in Politics School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University <i>'Russia and Ukraine: A case of David and Goliath?'</i>
Week 4	22nd March 12:45 - FT	Pauline Crellin Director of Trade Advocacy and World Events Department for International Trade <i>'The Civil Service: Seeking opportunities'</i>
Week 5	1st April 12:45 - FT	General The Lord Dannatt GCB, CBE, MC, DL Former Chief of the General Staff and member of the Lords <i>'A life of lessons: The development of the British Army'</i>

Fun in the English Department!

It has been a busy time in English these past few weeks with a host of cultural trips, all in homage to - our love of books.

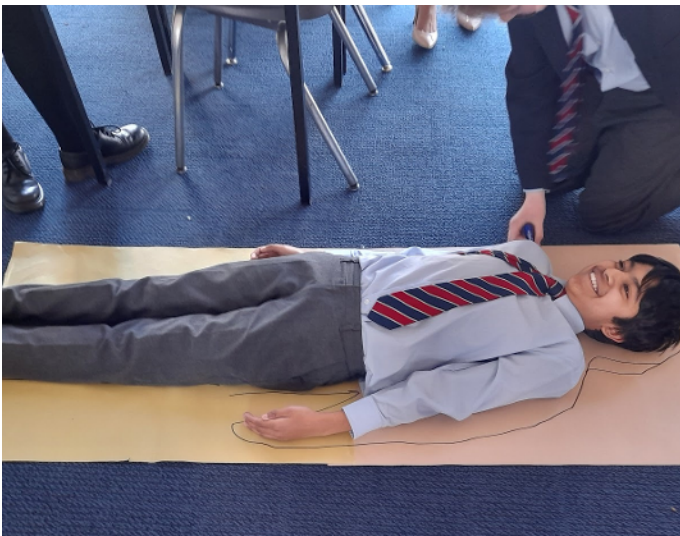
We share here a small flavour and insight into some of the fun we have enjoyed of late.

Mrs Dugdale and Ms Blakemore

First Year celebrate World Book Day and the books that have made us who we are:



Members of Study Skills collaborate to create life size characters of their own:



Review of Animal Farm at the Newcastle Theatre Royal



During half term, a group of pupils, as part of a collaboration between Year 6 and First Year, visited The Newcastle Theatre Royal to see an adaptation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. First published in 1945, this is the story of how a group of animals rebel against their human master, hoping to create a society where all animals are equal, free and happy. This is a political play that explores the issues of revolution, communism and the power of language. The pigs deliver emotive and intimidating speeches in order to manipulate the other animals into obeying them.

Directed by Robert Icke, the play has received fantastic reviews, and is being described as, "A piece of theatrical magic" and "One of the must-see plays for 2022". The director uses dramatic costumes and clever puppetry to fully realise the characters. The puppets were highly detailed and resembled each character accurately. The lighting and sound effects helped create suspense and drama. Boxer's death was a moment of particular tragedy in the play, especially given that he seemed to stand for all that was good and true.

This play was relevant and thought provoking. For us, the main message we left the theatre with was that communism hasn't worked to date because those in power tend to exploit it to benefit themselves.

We thought the production was fantastic and would recommend it to everyone.

All those who went to the play will be meeting at the amphitheatre later this half term to discuss further our thoughts on George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* and the play's interpretation of this.

Adam, Ewan and Zara Paul, First Year, Year 6 and Year 4

Artists' Corner

Artists' Corner is back and we can't wait to see what you've been up to!

Please send your work to: jessica.jenyns@yarmschool.org

You can submit anything from a painting or photograph to a sculpture or print... Happy Creating!

Jessica Jenyns, Visting Artist

Some of our wonderful work from First Year:



Understanding Ukraine

With so much coverage in the news of the events in Ukraine there is clearly an appetite to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the country, its history, culture and people. The challenges of the region have been long standing and reach far back into history, as well as been prominent in the struggles for democracy in recent years. There is a wealth of literature that addresses some of the pressing concerns of the day, not least the issue of Ukrainian identity and the country's complex relationship with the Soviet Union/Russia. Here are some titles some of you might find to be of interest - all are easily accessible in bookshops and online.

The Gates of Europe - Serhii Plokhy

This is an insightful exploration of the past, present and future of Ukraine in the hands of an award winning writer, who has also written extensively on Chernobyl.

Red Famine - Anne Applebaum

Focusing on Stalin's policy of agricultural collectivisation, this measure impacted significantly the 'breadbasket' of Ukraine. The consequences of the ensuing famine were catastrophic, and well analysed in this narrative history.

Borderland: A Journey Through the History of Ukraine - Anna Reid

Another sweeping history, but this one accessing the voices

of citizens to explore the complexities of national identity.

Ukraine Diaries - Andrey Kurkov

Written by one of Ukraine's leading novelists this explores the annexation of the Crimea in 2014.

Grey Bees - Andrey Kurkov

This novel by the same writer as Ukraine Diaries explores the time of tension and conflict through the eyes of a beekeeper. A quirky but insightful read.

Deaf Republic - Ilya Kaminsky

An award-winning parable in poetry form, the series set in an unnamed country follows the lives of private citizens in a town.

Putin's People - Catherine Belton

A highly praised account of the rise to power of Vladimir Putin.

The Man Without a Face - Masha Gessen

From a highly respected writer and political commentator, Masha Gessen, another account of the rise of Putin.

For those who are interested, on the 18th March the Politics Society will be meeting with Dr Valentina Feklyunina, a UK-based Ukrainian academic and expert in Russian foreign policy. The talk will take place on the Friday lunchtime in the Friarage Theatre. All are welcome to attend.

Mr S Edwards

Seasons Inspired Recycled Garment Competition

Why not get creative and design and make a fabulous creation for our April 26th Fashion Show in the PAA? Working on your own or in a group, take unwanted materials to make a show stopping garment based on the theme of Seasons and Weather.

More information about the evening coming soon, however for further details see Ms Jackson in W5.

Garments must be constructed from **unwanted materials, including plastic, paper, old textiles.**

Judging Criteria:

- Use of the Season theme
- Quality of the product
- Originality of the design

Products will be worn Tuesday 26th April

Technology Product and Fashion Show Senior School, PAA

See Ms Jackson for details



Double the Joy! Two Music Concerts to Enjoy in March

We have two fabulous concerts coming up so don't miss out on a chance to hear the magical musical offerings our talented students and pupils have for you!

Our first concert, our Spring Time Concert, takes place on Sunday 13th March and promises to be a lovely, relaxed occasion showcasing some of our smaller ensembles that meet each week alongside some solo and duet performances.

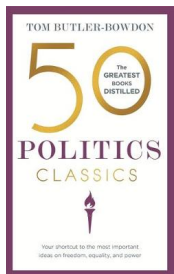
It will feature our 1st and 2nd Year Choir, Brass Group, Phoenix Band, String Group and Wind Band, Guitar Groups, Harp Ensemble, String Orchestra, and the Flute Group. Book your tickets [online here](#) for this wonderful welcome to Spring!

At the end of the month, on Thursday 31st March, you can enjoy our second concert of the term which will be coordinated by Upper Sixth student, Emily Carter, as a charity fundraising performance for Alzheimer's Society. In addition to solo and small ensemble items, the groups will be performing in this concert: 3rd & 4th Year Choir, Senior Choir, Chamber Choir, Barbershop, Big Band, Concert Band, String Orchestra, Sax Group, and Upper 6th Ensembles. Book tickets [online here](#) for this musical extravaganza, all for a good cause.

Watch this space for further exciting concert opportunities!

Politics Book Review

50 Politics Classics: Freedom Equality Power: Mind-Changing, World-Changing Ideas from Fifty Landmark Books - Tom Butler-Bowdon



I have recently finished reading '50 Politics Classics: Freedom Equality Power: Mind-Changing, World-Changing Ideas from Fifty Landmark Books' by Tom

Butler-Bowdon. From Abraham Lincoln to Nelson Mandela, and from Aristotle to George Orwell, *50 Politics Classics* clarifies the basis of the books, pamphlets, and speeches of the major leaders and great thinkers that

drive real-world change. Spanning 2,500 years, Tom Butler-Bowdon's book covers activists, war strategists, visionary leaders, economists, philosophers of freedom, feminists, conservatives and environmentalists, right up to contemporary classics such as *The Spirit Level* and *No Logo*. Whatever your personal opinions, this book gives you a greater understanding of the key ideas people have had in our times.

Butler-Bowdon manages to compile 50 political classics into short, highly engaging summaries. Each of which includes articulated summaries of the original authors messages, several quotes from the original text, helpful information about the political climate the book was written in, and brief background information about each author. Tom Butler-Bowdon does an impressive job of choosing books with a wide array of viewpoints that have helped shape politics into what it is today. As a result, each summary educates, inspires, and entertains in unique ways - depending on the style and sentiment of the original text.

What is Politics? Politikos in ancient Greek meant the affairs of the city-state of Athens, and the polis was the body of the citizens that ran the city. From the beginning, "politics" was something owned by the people. This is why books such as this help reinforce politics, they bring knowledge back to the people and help educate the public on some of the most important ideas on freedom, equality, and power. "Man is by nature a political animal" - Aristotle. Although this famous quote, now 2,300 years on, may seem obvious as nearly the whole world lives in some sort of political state where we abide by the rules and regulations that have been set in place. We come together for the sake of community and live under laws for good reason, with our lives being shaped by the polity in which we live. Aristotle believed that the state was a "creation of nature" that came before the individual. To him, individuals who decided to stay on their own would remain "either a beast or a god." The state was in every sense greater than the individual, and being part of it was a privilege. Humans existed for the glory of the state, not vice versa.

The story of Socrates further reveals this classical reverence for the state. Having been given a death sentence for exposing hypocrisy and corruption in the Athenian government, Socrates' friends wanted him to bribe the jailers and escape. Why not continue damning its rulers from exile? Surely that would be the most useful thing to do. Yet Socrates did exactly the opposite. Fully accepting his fate on the grounds that his sentence had been handed down in an Athenian court, he chose to die. The act would demonstrate that the state and its rules were more important than any one person, even one who felt that the laws were wrong. This shortcut of a great political idea is the kind that fills this book, with 49 other ideologies to further expand your knowledge on.

I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who wants to build their knowledge on the basic understandings of the most important ideologies of politics. This book has helped me understand world-changing ideas without overcomplicating them, something few authors manage to do. For the time-pressed casual reader - you can read this book a few pages at a time, learning gem after gem for however long you feel like reading. For those deeply interested in politics - this book is the perfect place to immerse yourself in worldly knowledge and to gain insight as to which authors' works you most resonate with.

Georgia Charnley, Lower Sixth



A vibrant poster for the Yarm School Music Department's Spring Time Concert. The background features a scenic view of a stone bridge over a river, with two lambs standing on the bridge. The title 'Spring Time' is written in a large, green, cursive font, and 'CONCERT' is in a bold, green, blocky font. The text 'YARM SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT PRESENTS:' is at the top. The date 'Sunday 13th March 2022, 6pm' is in a yellow box. The Yarm School logo is at the top center. The Princess Alexandra Auditorium logo is at the bottom left and right.

YARM SCHOOL
EDUCATING FOR LIFE

YARM SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT PRESENTS:

Spring Time
CONCERT

Sunday 13th March 2022, 6pm

Tickets are available from www.thepaaonline.org or by calling the Box office on (01642) 792587

PRINCESS ALEXANDRA AUDITORIUM



A black and white poster for the Yarm School Charity Concert. The central text reads 'CHARITY CONCERT' and 'THURSDAY 31ST MARCH, 7PM'. The Yarm School logo is at the top center. The poster is surrounded by several small photos of students performing various instruments, including harp, violin, drums, and guitar. A larger photo in the center shows a group of students on stage holding signs that say 'YARM SCHOOL'.

YARM SCHOOL
EDUCATING FOR LIFE

CHARITY CONCERT
THURSDAY 31ST MARCH, 7PM

All tickets are £5 and are available from www.thepaaonline.org or at the Box office on 01642 792587



**Lower Sixth Drama and Theatre Students
(and guest) perform**

Things I Know To Be True

Wed 9th, Thur 10th, Fri 11th March 2022

Studio Theatre 7:00pm

Bob and Fran Price love each other. And their children.
Perhaps too much.

Rosie has left home ... and returned.
Pip is unhappy in her marriage.
Ben is pushing the boundaries.
Mark is struggling with his identity.

And yet there is a greater tragedy about to strike them all...

A powerful, disturbing and uplifting play.

Please be aware

This is an adult play, performed by our most experienced actors. They have seen the play, been touched by it and want to perform it. It will be uncut and in its original form. The play tackles the themes of gender identity and bereavement. The characters face real and troubling issues, and their understandably emotional responses are sometimes conveyed through shocking language that is appropriate to the intensity of the situation. If you chose to come - and we hope you do - please be aware of this.

Suitable for 5th Year and above.

Tickets £5 adults, £1 for external students, free to Yarm Students.

Tickets available online [here](#)

Will Ferguson makes England debut

Congratulations to Fourth Year pupil Will Ferguson who has made his England debut in games against Ireland at Lilleshall National Sports Centre during half term.

England won 5-0 in their first game and Will produced some outstanding moments including an assist for England's fourth goal- it was a strong confident start and an exciting moment to be playing in your national colours for the first time.

The second game was played in horrendous weather conditions with high winds and heavy rain- again, Will can be proud with the contribution he made in a 3-0 win. He will continue to grow in confidence in upcoming training camps and future international games but can be very proud of his achievements so far!



Sport Weeks Ahead

The weeks ahead are now available online.

You can [view them here](#).

Under 13 Boys make a Successful Trip to Blackpool

On Tuesday 1st March, our U13 hockey team played Rossall in the last 16 of the National Independent Schools Cup.

We were off to a good start with an early goal and the morale of the team was high. We continued to play well with Olly Carr getting in behind their defence to score. Jude Crack led by example in the CM position as the captain and scored two goals to pay off his hard work. Showing some good signs of team efforts, we had racked up three goals and the game was in our hands. These goals were from Jude Crack (2) and Olly Carr (1).

In the second half, the opposition stepped up with their game and pressured us very well. Because of this, they earned themselves a few short corners. With all the defenders at the short corners: Jude Crack, Will Gwynne-Jones, Mustafa El-Sherif, Oliver Blake, Jacob Hardy and the goalkeeper Jasman Sidhu, we were able to defend them excellently.

However, the opposition kept knocking on our door and after one slip up from our defence they were through on goal and they scored. We were clearly disappointed but bounced back and were able to extend the lead to 5 with Paddy Key (1) and Olly Carr (1) scoring.

In the last few minutes of the game, they got 3 short corners. In the first one, Jude Crack was unlucky and conceded another short corner (stick tackle). In the second, the ball hit Mustafa's foot leading to another one. The final short corner was eventful. The runners came sprinting out and Jude committed to a block but it was not enough. It came to Mustafa and it looked like he was going to clear it, but a surprise deflection caused Jasman Sidhu to make a world-class save, just saving it at his feet from close range. The ball bounced to Jude and he cleared it out of danger for the full time whistle to blow.

This means that the U13 boys are through to the last 8 in the country, playing King's School, Chester in the next competitive round as they advance.

Well played Yarm!

Scorers: Jude Crack (2), Olly Carr (2), Paddy Key (1)

Jude Crack and Jasman Sidhu, Second Year



Football: Charlie Thompson Captains England's ISFA Team

Congratulations to Fifth Year pupil, Charlie Thompson, who captained his country this week as he played football for England's ISFA team against Brighton and Hove Albion U16 Academy team in preparation for an upcoming international v Wales. Well done Charlie!



Table Tennis: Anand Raviprakash Represents Durham County

Fourth Year pupil, Anand Raviprakash, was proud to play for Durham at the Table Tennis England County Championship Cadet Premier Weekend, on 26th and 27th February. The competition took place at the Sir Tom Finney Sports Centre at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston, where eight County Cadet Premier Division teams competed over seven rounds.

Anand played in the coveted No. 1 position for Durham and registered some good wins against top seeded British players. Congratulations Anand!



Rugby Sevens

The 7s season is up and running and all the teams have been training hard and now starting to put that into good effect in the tournaments. Although the weather has already been a factor; 3 events cancelled, there has still been plenty of action. Following on from the U16s winning the plate at the RGS Invitational 7s;

The U13 team headed to the DCSF tournament for their first ever 7s event for the school. They played some superb rugby, moving the ball to space well and scoring a good number of tries. They record wins over RGS Newcastle and St Peter's York to name a few. They fell just short of winning some silverware on the day, but learnt a great deal and are ready for Terrington Hall next week.

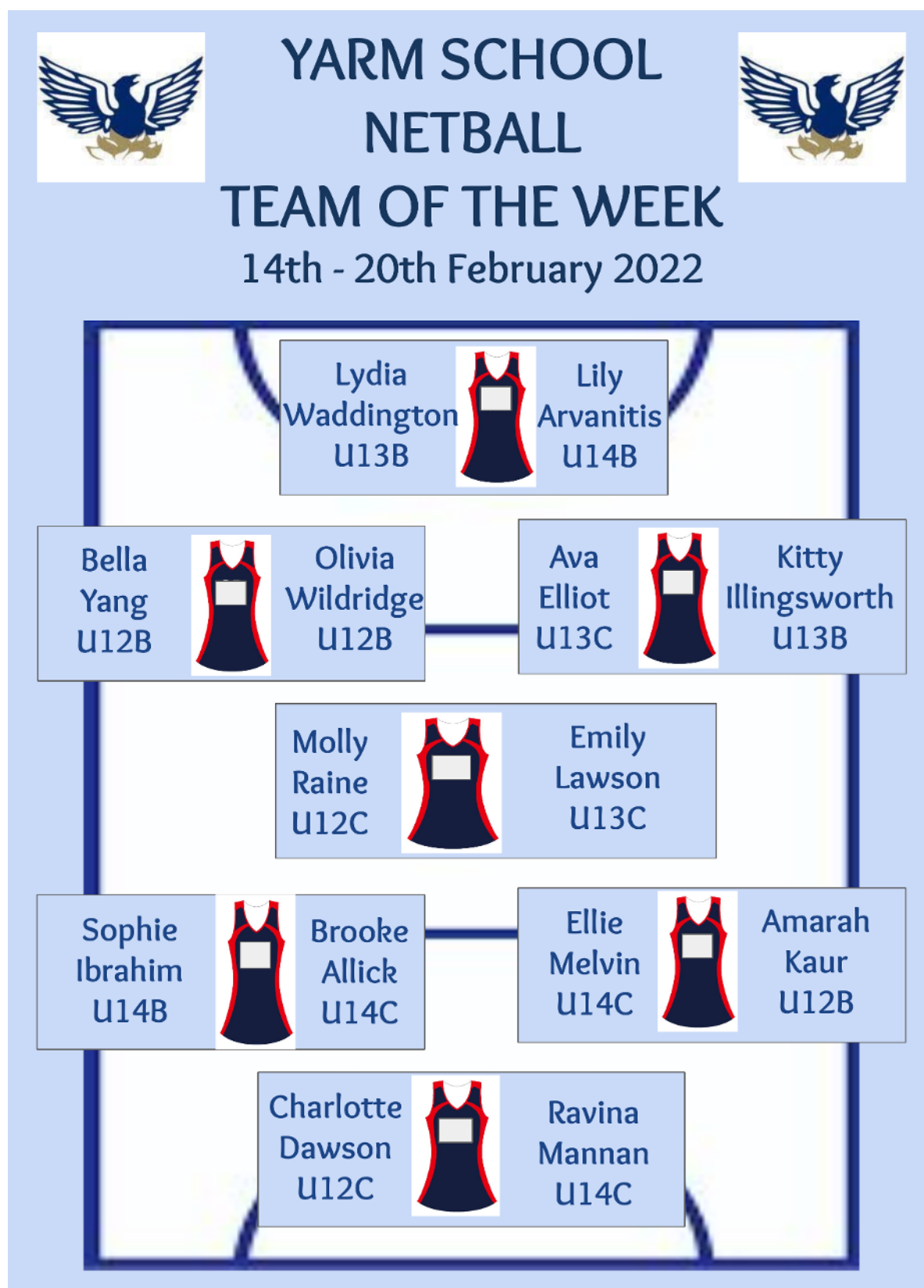
The U14 team have had two tournaments recently; Sedbergh last Saturday (during half term, such is their commitment) and DCSF this week. Both of these are very high standard tournaments, with us amongst the top schools in the north taking part. Across the events they developed hugely and all players showed top form. Their appreciation of playing to the edges, attacking gaps in the defence and their connectivity in D were all plus points. They recorded wins against the likes of Barnard Castle, QEGS Penrith, QES Kirkby Lonsdale and a fantastic game against QEGS Wakefield was a 5-5 draw; they pushed Sedbergh, the double winners, hard in a 36-14 loss.

The U16s were on form at the County 7s, were on fire in the pool stages, playing ambitious and skillful attacking rugby in defeating Durham, Barnard Castle and Carmel all without conceding; superb defence. In the final they agonisingly missed out 19-24 to a physical and abrasive Durham Johnston side.

Finally the 1st VII, short of any Upper Sixth players on mocks, played their first 7s tournament for many years at the NSB Invitational. The conditions were far from ideal but the quality of the ball handling and their clinical attacking of weaknesses in the opposition defence, saw them score a good number of tries throughout the tournament. They only lost one game all day, and that by 1 try, as they took home the Plate title; thoroughly well deserved. #sea

A great week or so of 7s action, which continues with the U12 Yarm tournament today and overall all the teams are building well towards Rosslyn Park National Schools' 7s later in March.





Netball U13B vs Eggescliffe

Before Half Term, the U13B team played Eggescliffe School. The match started off well and although they were a strong team with many good players Yarm managed to score some lovely goals, only conceding a few. As the game went on Eggescliffe were in the lead, however throughout the last half there was some lovely netball with great passes from back lines. Even though we lost 13-9 the team played some great netball against a very strong team.

Darcey Allcock, Second Year

DON'T MISS - THIS WEEK!

Beyond the Barricade

Celebrating a fantastic 22 years touring, the UK's longest running Musical Theatre Concert Tour features past principal performers from Les Miserables and delivers over two hours of the best of Broadway and the West End, ending of course with a stunning finale from Les Mis.

This brand new show will include many of the best numbers that have made Beyond the Barricade the most popular musical theatre concert in the country.

Saturday 5th March 2022, 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)



COMING SOON

Simon & Garfunkel Through The Years

Simon & Garfunkel: Through the Years is the most authentic sounding concert to the unforgettable music of Simon & Garfunkel.

Made up of Dan Haynes & Pete Richards, Bookends have toured the globe extensively with their concerts being described as 'simply breath-taking'.

Hear many of the hits such as The Sound of Silence, Mrs Robinson, The Boxer and Bookends' own beautiful rendition of the unforgettable Bridge Over Troubled Water. This is without doubt the closest thing to Simon & Garfunkel touring the world today.

Saturday 26th March 2022, 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)



A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

In the Mood For Miller

The fabulous Syd Lawrence Orchestra are returning to The Princess Alexandra Auditorium under the musical direction of Chris Dean.

This energetic Orchestra will bring you a glorious and exciting evening of Glenn Miller hits and other favourites from the Big Band era.

The very best in big band music from Britain's most iconic big band, an evening guaranteed to get you "In The Mood"!

Sunday 10th April 2022, 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)





What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP



WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls. Its end-to-end encryption means messages can only be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 (involving sharing data with parent company Facebook) caused millions to leave the app, but the new policy was widely misinterpreted – it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCAMS

Fraudsters occasionally send WhatsApp messages pretending to offer prizes – encouraging the user to click on a link to win. Other common scams involve warning someone that their WhatsApp subscription has run out (aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details) or impersonating a friend or relative and asking for money to be transferred to help with an emergency.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Users can set WhatsApp messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Photos and videos can also be instructed to disappear after the recipient has viewed them. These files can't be saved or forwarded – so if your child was sent an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver can take a screenshot and save that as evidence.

ENABLING FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India in 2018, some outbreaks of mob violence appear to have been sparked by false allegations being shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

POTENTIAL CYBERBULLYING

Group chat and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a WhatsApp chat, you only need the mobile number of the person you want to message (the other person also needs to have the app). WhatsApp can access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts also use the app. So if your child has ever given their phone number to someone they don't know, that person could use it to contact them via WhatsApp.

LOCATION SHARING

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a 'simple and secure way to let people know where you are.' It is a useful method for a young person to let loved ones know they're safe – but if they used it in a chat with people they don't know, they would be exposing their location to them, too.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CLICK HERE

CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though someone would need a child's phone number to add them as a contact, it's also worth altering a young person's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody' – choosing one of the latter two ensures that your child's profile is better protected.

EXPLAIN ABOUT BLOCKING

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them using 'settings' in the chat. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – so they also need to be deleted from the address book.

REPORT POTENTIAL SCAMS

Young people shouldn't engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they'll be given the option to report it as spam. If the sender claims to be a friend or relative, call that person on their usual number to verify it really is them, or if it's someone trying to trick your child.

LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is in a group chat that is making them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they don't want to be part of, they can use WhatsApp's group settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.

THINK ABOUT LOCATION

If your child needs to use the 'live location' function to show you or one of their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives a range of 'live location' options, and your child should manually stop sharing their position as soon as it is no longer needed.

DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child posts a message they want to delete, WhatsApp allows the user seven minutes to erase a message. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone'. However, it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.

CHECK THE FACTS

You can now fact-check WhatsApp messages that have been forwarded at least five times, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was true or not.

Meet Our Expert

Parveen Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



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