

Newsletter



No: 1311 www.yarmschool.org | 24th June 2022

Headmaster's Welcome

The end of term hurtles ever closer and the weather reminds us that summer is on it's way, but there is still a huge amount going on in school and more to come before we disperse for the summer break. Next week's long-awaited musical, *Beauty and the Beast*, promises to be brilliant - I snuck into a rehearsal this week and absorbed the atmosphere - excitement is building and I strongly encourage you to get a ticket for one of the four shows next week. We have the Dovecote Concert coming in the final week (6th July), and a community art day open to all families who want to come and help produce some exciting and exquisite 'trash sculptures' - details within. After the success of the YSA Bollywood Ball on Saturday - which was a fabulous evening - there is another opportunity to enjoy a masquerade ball in September (9th) organised by Katherine as part of her EPQ.

Various reports of societies and trips offer a fascinating window into the vibrant and varied things going on in School. The Community Action Group have been supporting Yarm Wellness, pupils have met for some high culture and high tea in the Carnegie Literary event, Textiles have visited Newcastle to explore their coursework options, Sixth Formers have mentored the prep pupils, students have visited the Civil Service's Economic Campus in Darlington, and much more.

In sport, we learned this week that Yarm School is very, very good (the best in the country, in fact) at go karting! Huge congratulations to both teams involved, but particularly to our 'A Team' of Callum, Alexander and Oscar who went all the way to the chequered flag in the National Final in their first attempt at this competition, beating many experienced schools along the way. A terrific achievement, and one made possible by the support of the B team along the way. Our rowers put on a fantastic performance at Henley Women's Regatta, entering two coxed fours and doing themselves proud at such a prestigious event. In York, other rowers came away with a range of successes, but as Mrs Lund reports, demonstrated outstanding team spirit on and off the water. Team spirit was there in abundance on the cricket field, too, with some strong performances from the teams representing the School last week. Congratulations to all involved.

Dr Huw Williams

Geography trip to Wales

Earlier this week the Lower Sixth Geographers travelled to sunny Rhyd-y-creuau Field Studies Centre in Wales in order to trial a range of geographical skills and spend time collecting data for their NEAs (non-examined assessments).

Emotion mapping, functional change analysis, modal housing survey and bi-polar environmental quality assessments were a few of the techniques they implemented whilst looking at urban change in Llandudno.

They also spent time carrying out infiltration studies in the Conwy Valley to help extend their understanding of the water and carbon section of the course before celebrating the end of successful data collection days with a campfire and s'mores.

We were fortunate to have glorious Welsh sunshine for the duration. All the students worked very hard showing excellent commitment and were an absolute pleasure to take on fieldwork. Thank you to Mr Ivey for joining us on the trip and thank you also to Ben and collaborators for the geographically themed playlist!

Mrs K Baines



It's next week! Book your tickets now! [Click here](#) to get your tickets before they sell out.



Yarm School's production of Beauty and the Beast is kindly sponsored by
Active Chartered Financial Planners and Cleveland Land Services

Yarm School proudly presents



Wednesday 29th June - Saturday 2nd July, 7.30pm

Adults £12.00, Children £8.00

To book tickets: 01642 792587 or www.thepaaonline.org

Director
Liam Gilbert

Musical Directors
Katie Staggs & Andrew McIntyre

Choreographer
Jess Dunkley

Producer
David Boddy

Music by
Alan Menken

Lyrics by
Howard Ashman & Tim Rice

Book by
Linda Woolverton

Originally Directed by Robert Jess Roth

Originally Produced by Disney Theatrical Productions

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI
www.mtishows.co.uk

Sixth Form students explore Civil Service opportunities at the Darlington Economic



Following up on a recent visit to the school of Pauline Crellin, Director of UK Trade Advocacy and World Events at the Department for International Trade, this week we arranged a visit of keen Sixth Form students to the Darlington Economic Campus. Currently situated in the centre of Darlington, but expanding at a rate that requires it to move to another temporary building soon, and then eventually to a new brownfield site in the town, the cluster of departments includes the Department of Trade and Industry, the Department Education and the Treasury. This is part of a nationwide dispersal of otherwise London-centric departments across the country, with a heavy share settling in the north east.



Our visit was designed to find out more about these arrangements but equally to build a relationship with the Civil Service facilitating greater career opportunities for the students in the future. After clearing security the students were given a presentation by Pauline Crellin,

detailing her role, career profile and experiences working with the Civil Service, before she introduced the group to a panel of current employees working in a range of capacities, as well as demonstrating the diverse backgrounds of these members of staff. Some with degrees in PPE and Biology, some young graduates, others having enter after a period of time in the retail sector - the group was an effective insight into the employment prospects that are available.

The group were able to explore their ideas further through a

Q&A session with the panel learning more about entry routes, career trajectories and the training programmes on offer. This shift to the region is permanent and has now reached a level of momentum and critical mass that means the Civil Service is capable of making a significant contribution to the town and the wider region. With plans for the expanded site scheduled to reach fruition around 2025 that should be in good time for many of our current students at the time of their graduation. We were most appreciative of the time, effort and guidance provided by Pauline and her colleagues, and it provided some very attractive considerations to the students as they considered their future options.

Mr S Edwards



**Please join us on Saturday 2nd July
for a day of sculpture-making!**

This event is free but tickets are required

There are 3 bookable slots throughout the day:

10:00-11:30

11:30-13:00

13:00-15:00

Slots are limited so tickets will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis!

(Refreshments provided)

Please contact jessica.jenyns@yarmschool.org
for more information and to book your place.

School Uniform Order Deadline Approaching!

Please ensure to order any uniform required from perryuniform.co.uk by the 30th of June to guarantee arrival by the the start of the new school year in September.

If you need any help or advice please contact:

The Uniform Showroom

Tel: 01642792588

Email: uniformshop@yarmschool.org

Perry Customer Service

Tel: 01132389520

Email: info@perryuniform.co.uk

Yarm Wellness Centre Visit and Painting

Last week, members of the Community Action group visited the recently refurbished Yarm Wellness Centre. Housed in a former Victorian school under the viaduct in town, the project seeks to have a positive impact on the wellbeing of the wider community through the provision of creative, educational, fitness and wellness classes. Through the development of both the beautiful indoor facilities and the flourishing garden space, the charity hopes to offer a warm safe space in which members of the community can engage with others and aims to reduce isolation.

Having potted plants and painted both water butts and watering cans over the course of the year, the group were given one final task of the year: to decorate a large bin that was proving somewhat of an eyesore!

In the autumn, we hope to complete a mural inside the centre; it would be wonderful if some more of our budding artists could be involved!

The Community Action Group



Money Talks!

The Economics and Business Department were delighted to welcome Mrs Kelly Heward (School Finance Manager) into two of our Lower Sixth Business lessons this week, where she gave fascinating talks and answered a plethora of questions relating to Accounting Concepts.

Mrs Heward really brought the topic to life and engaged the interest of the students. We are really grateful to her for taking the time from her very busy schedule to once again support our department.



Miss CE Rhodes

The Carnegie Award Book Club 2022

Earlier this week, a number of Yarm School and Conyers pupils came together to attend the Carnegie Literary Tea. We explored a range of different books that have been shortlisted for this year's prestigious Yoto Carnegie YA prize. This saw us discussing: 'Cane Warriors', 'Everyone Dies Famous in a Small Town', 'October October', 'The Crossing', 'Guard your Heart', 'When the Sky Falls', 'Tsunami Girl', and lastly, 'Punching the Air'.

The Carnegie Prize was established in 1936 in memory of the philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, who made it his life's mission to spread a love of reading by establishing free libraries. By the time of his death, he had set up more than 2,800 libraries across the English speaking world.

We duly met after school in our library, where we discussed and debated various different questions about each book and literature in general. Our shared conversations addressed questions, such as: what stories do you find unrepresented, and is it more powerful for stories to be read or heard? Alongside our conversation, we also enjoyed tea, juice, scones and sandwiches.

At the end of our discussion, we came to the conclusion that the best book was 'October October' by Katya Balen, which has also won the public vote!

This event is amazing at encouraging you to have a wider range of book genres for young adult fiction. It offers an opportunity to explore books with messages that are engraved into the story. These books really open your perspective and mindset, leaving you to question the power of stories.

Our Carnegie Literary Tea is open to all every year and has been going for 10 years! Feel welcome to join anytime for an interesting book talk-and maybe some delicious snacks!

By Connie Deering, Sarah Abbas, Charlotte Dawson and Hira Rauf



Playing the Money Making Game?

This time it was the turn of co-Chair Ben Cordwell-Smith to enlighten the amassed crowd of Lower Sixth Economists, Business students and friends from beyond the department. He was keen to link his passions of Economics and Golf and therefore chose to discuss how different sporting organisations create revenue on a year to year basis and how they impact the national and global economy. Ben examined four different organisations and how they have developed/are developing in the world of sport, namely the Olympics, Red Bull, the Premier League and the LIV Invitational, and the audience relished the chance to see just how Economics and Business truly can be applied to virtually all aspects of life!

Thank you to Ben and all those who attended, and as we have arranged three special careers opportunities next week (with visits from QUB and Dundee University, and a visit to the Treasury at Darlington) we will have a break from the Soc this Thursday, but look forward to another immersive opportunity the following week.

Miss C Rhodes

Pure Escapism..... What really happens in B1 every Thursday Period 6?

Do you want to try sticker by numbers? Querkles? Mindful colouring? Epic dot-to-dots? Find out if the butler did it? Do you want to smash SMERSH? Return to Manderley? Find a truth universally acknowledged? And perhaps you like biscuits?

Miss Rhodes asked some of those who opted for Pure Escapism this year what they thought to it....

These are the quotes...

"I'm glad I chose pure escapism because I love biscuits (and silence)!"

Thank you very much for making my Thursday period 6 a lot more tolerable."

"I enjoyed pure escapism because it gave me a chance to unwind and also biscuits were provided!"

"I chose Escapism this term as an activity as it helped me balance my time between homework and a relaxing, stress free time to spend with my friends - I truly enjoyed it! "

"Pure Escapism is a great place to get lost in a book and distract yourself from your studies, and you can't really say no when there are biscuits involved."

Maybe this is an activity you might consider next year?

Miss C Rhodes




YARM SCHOOL
EDUCATING FOR LIFE
Wednesday July 6th
6.30pm Music Festival
& BBQ
N.B. A separate BBQ ticket
must be purchased online or
bought from the box office
for each person wishing to
partake (£5.00pp)

Tickets are FREE (...but are required) and are available from www.thepaaonline.org or from the box office. A bar is available at the event where you can purchase a variety of cool refreshing drinks

Former Pupil Amelia Coburn performs at the Aldeburgh Festival



Amelia Coburn has been performing since her time in Sixth Form and yet managed to combine this with studying towards a Languages degree at the University of Nottingham. Having now graduated she is all in on the development of her career as a folk musician. She is a previous nominee for the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Awards and in recent years has travelled extensively with her talent with future visits including France and Austria. She is also set to return again this year to the Cambridge Folk Festival, a world-renowned gathering of the finest of folk.

Amelia played at the weekend to a sell out crowd to the music-loving attendees at the long established Aldeburgh Music Festival situated on the Suffolk coast. Amelia has developed a well-crafted style in part wedded into the folk tradition of storytelling and the building of an intimate rapport with her audience, as well as songs that range from the profound to the whimsical, but always delivered with distinct originality. In an early evening session she soon had the crowd participating with abandon, singing along to a quirky song - The Cheese Song - on the perils of this food, alongside a heartfelt song Please Go Gently, a tribute to her grandfather through a reworking of Dylan Thomas' famous poem. Dublin Serenade was a wistful, contemplative musical recollection of a long night spent in the city. Whilst an accomplished performer on the ukulele it is very much Amelia's voice which seals and steals the show, a voice with depth and texture, captivating and charming what at Aldeburgh is a tough and knowledgeable crowd.

[Amelia's website](#)

[Amelia's Twitter](#)

Fourth Year Textiles: Newcastle Trip

On June the 1st the exam board released the topics for this year's GCSE Textile projects. As part of the process of gathering inspiration to design a unique product we needed to look at what is currently available on the market from cost to trends and gather details on products from experts. To do this we visited Newcastle retail stores, looking at a wide range of stores from charity shops and vintage clothing to Fenwick's designer brands and high street. The whole time we were mindful of the garment we were working towards and it was a great opportunity to focus and push the projects forward. Back in the classroom we will take all of the ideas and use them to help us design commercial products which is required for GCSE. The day was particularly enjoyable because we were able to take a look at the modern fashion trends and use our findings to inspire our garments. It was also great because we were able to feel the kinds of fabrics we could use and were able to go out and experience the fashion industry for ourselves. It was a fun day, appreciating we were finally in the shops not just online looking for trends. We want to thank Mrs Wright and Mrs Jackson for a great day.

Pearl Lightwood



Lower Sixth student, Katherine Henley, is organising a fundraising ball in aid of Parkinson's UK for her EPQ project. Tickets are now available and can be bought by [following this link](#).

TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE

Click here for tickets

Ticket price: £60

Yarm school pupil Katherine Henley's EPQ project presents:

MASQUERADE

AUTUMN CHARITY BALL & DINNER

Black tie or party wear with a fabulous mask



In support of Parkinson's UK

What's included in the ball?

Welcome drink
3 course meal
Coffees and chocolates

During the ball:

A raffle and auction where you will get the chance to win some fantastic prizes. The night will end with a DJ and you can dance the night away!

The night will be hosted by broadcaster and journalist Claire McCollum who is also a Parkinson's Ambassador.

Friday 9th September 2022

Judges Country House Hotel, Kirklevington

It's the final countdown for the Prep Summer Fair!

This Tuesday was the last chance for the Lower Sixth Business Mentors to work with their Year 6 teams and help them prepare for Friday's Summer Fair.

The 12 students have been a fabulous support to the Prep children and it has been lovely to see the interactions and mutual respect between the years.

In the words of the students:

"Mentoring the Year 6s has been great! I have really enjoyed watching them work together to come up with new and creative ideas, as well as teaching them some important and valuable lessons about business"

"Being a business mentor is great fun, and also teaches you how to deal with entrepreneurs that don't quite understand the business world the same way the specification is taught"

"It sets you apart from others when applying to uni"

"It's exciting seeing the outcome of your hard work on the Prep schools pupils faces"

We are really grateful to Mr Stone and the staff at the Prep for making us feel so welcome and giving us this great opportunity, and of course to the pupils for being fabulous and friendly.

Miss C Rhodes



Careers update - Universities and Open Days

At this time of year a good many of the L6 are busily exploring their future options for life beyond Yarm. For a small but growing number this will be in the form of apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships, often a very attractive alternative given the 'earn whilst you learn' model of these programmes. Many are allied to universities and through a system of weekly release arrangements culminate in the securing of a degree alongside a work-based experience.



For many others their destination will be a university or perhaps art or drama school, or music conservatoire. Beyond this initial decision there is a good deal of head scratching to be done over the many decisions to be taken. A foundation course or degree programme? An institution near or far from home? A campus university or one blended into a city? Students and parents have much to weigh up; cost of living, length of course, accommodation offerings, teaching quality, welfare provision, employment prospects.

Many students are well under way in their research using online tools such as UniFrog, Course Finder, UCAS, Student Room, taster lectures and YouTube offerings. It is also the season for Open Days and students should seek to use these to maximum effect; they can be helpful in an impressionistic sense - how does this place look and feel - but can be used for a more granular exploration of the offerings of a university. It is of course a complex web of considerations but I would urge students to prioritise considerations of the course - its contents, its delivery, its options and flexibility - as this should be the very bread and butter of the university experience.

This week we have welcomed into school a representative from Queen's University Belfast. This institution is sadly much overlooked or perhaps looked over across a stretch of water that deters too many. As the presentation explained the city has one of the lowest crime rates according to the British Crime Survey, the lowest cost of living, the least expensive student accommodation, as well as numerous financial enticements such as an automatic scholarship worth £3000 for students gaining ABB or above in their A Levels. They are also offering £100 travel grants for all those wishing to attend an Open Day. The university is engaged in a significant period of building development and is ranking impressively in a large number of subject areas both nationally and globally. The talk certainly offered lots of new considerations for students.



Henley Women's Regatta and York Summer Regatta

Henley Women's Regatta is the premier regatta for women in the United Kingdom. Each year more than 1,500 rowers travel from all over the UK and from across the world to compete in this prestigious event. Held on the rowing world's most iconic stretch of the river Thames, HWR offers exciting side-by-side match racing for a wide range of competitors, from juniors to university and club to international level.

This year Yarm School BC entered two girls' coxed fours into the junior event. With 24 crews entered, the girls had to undergo a time trial to qualify for the main regatta which was limited to 16 crews. Amidst the best crews in the country, both crews successfully qualified for the next round. Spirits were high and everyone was excited until the draw came out. The two Yarm crews had to race each other!! Although we would be guaranteed a crew through to the quarter-finals, this is not what we had hoped for. Nevertheless, the girls took it all in their stride – such is the excitement of rowing on the Henley course.

Unfortunately there can be only one winner and the crew of Emily Dunn, Cordelia Deering, Harriet White, Lilian Dufton and Annabel Cunningham beat the crew of Siya Purthuraya, Charlotte Wood, Eve Kempster, Rebecca Keetley and Bakaer Noble by 1 length. Both crews gave their all in what was a close race for most of the course.



On the second day of racing, the winning crew were drawn against Kingston Grammar School.



This was always going to be a hard race as Kingston had pre-qualified as one of the fastest fours. But the crew from Yarm BC fought hard all the way and only lost by half a length. Although a little disappointment, they said they had given everything. And we can't ask for more than that.



Meanwhile, younger girls' crews and the boys were competing at York Summer Regatta. In glorious sunshine, the first win of the day came from Archie Norton in the Junior 18 singles event, beating both Will Woodhead and Deacon Laverick.



The senior boys' coxed four came up against the eventual winners in their heat, but lost by very little in a tight race.



Izadin Qasem and Ethan Stannard then jumped into a double scull to take the second win of the day.

The third win also came in a double sculls event. Luke Anderson combined with Will Jeavons to win the Junior 15 event.

Yarm School BC had entered a lot of small boats into the regatta to give everyone an opportunity to race more than once as York Summer Regatta would be the last event of the season for some of the younger pupils. Libby Laverick won the Junior 15 girls' single event; the girls' junior 14 coxed four of Lydia Wain, Sally Matthews, Cody Staggs, Rishika Chawla and Muskaan Assundani won their event and Patrick Tulloch took his first win in the Junior 14 singles event.



As we say so many times, not everyone can win. But the camaraderie and the effort that goes into the sport is a joy to

see. Team work is the essence of rowing and this can be seen on the water, but it can also be seen on the land with everyone helping each other.

The next event is on Friday 24th June with the senior boys' quad and the senior girls' eight both hoping to qualify for Henley Royal Regatta.



Cricket Match Reports 6th - 17th June

U14 vs Hetton

Won by two wickets

On the first day back, the students played in their Durham Cup second round match where they faced off against Hetton School. Hetton batted first scoring 109-7 off 20 overs. Yarm lost wickets regularly and couldn't build a partnership, but developed a fine last spell with Nicholas Clements scoring a 6 to win the game, 111-8.

U12 vs St Johns

Won by 10 wickets

Opposition pulled out on the morning of the fixture, therefore Yarm progress to the next round.

U12/U13 Mixed Match vs Ampleforth

No scores were kept, and both teams insisted on a pairs style format, with each batting pair getting 4 overs each. The boundary was kept long to ensure that lots of running was going to be needed.

Mustafa El-Sherif was the standout player with the bat, and wickets were taken by Deen Mohammed, Adam Paul and Edward Lamb.

U15 vs Durham School

Won by 70 Runs

Yarm batted first on a smaller boundary. An unfortunate start to the game left us 0-1, however two outstanding batting performances from Harry Carter scoring his first 50 of the week, and Timmy Foley scoring 61 off around 20/30 balls, losing 4 balls was the highlight of the day. They posted an impressive 156-9 off 20 overs, and our bowlers were very economical with the ball and restricted Durham to 86 all out.

U14 vs St Thomas More

Durham Cup Quarter Final

Won by 6 wickets

The quarter final was always going to be a tough game on a short boundary at Green Lane. STM batted first and got off very quickly, but some outstanding bowling between overs 14-19 restricted the opposition to 144-6, Dhruv Wadehra being the pick off the bowlers, taking three caught and bowled chances. The chase started a bit slowly but again Harry Carter batted the whole innings scoring his second 50 off the week, assisted by James Graham scoring 33, but the winning runs off the player of the week Harry Carter scoring a 6 to win the game, 145-4.

U12 & U13 vs Durham School

On Thursday, both year groups played Durham School. It was always going to be a tough task for the U13's with 5

unavailable, 4 playing for Cleveland Schools. Durham chased the score down in the 16th over, featuring standout performers Sam Shawcross and Harvey Dawson.

U12 had a huge score of 165 to chase down and lots of batting work was needed, but Seb Jafri and Oli Dunkin batted fantastically well, to get to a respectable score of 87.



U13 Durham Cup 2nd Round vs St. Michael's

Yarm scored 176 - 2 off 20 overs

Jude Crack with an amazing 100* - Well done Jude



Go-Karting

On Friday 17th June after several months of attending go-karting sessions at TeamSport Stockton, followed by many hours of practicing and racing at the local and regional finals, Yarm School won the National Final of the British Schools Karting Championship (BSKC) in Warrington.

In order to achieve such an exceptional result, both Yarm School A and B teams raced against each other at each of the local, regional and national venues to learn the track, learn how and where to overtake, how to block and the optimal racing line, to reduce lap times.

All of the practice paid off - The BSKC started with 138 teams comprising 3 members each; it ended with one team winning, Yarm School's A team. The other karting teams boasted a number of very accomplished drivers including the reigning British Indoor Karting Champion and the previous winners, Brentwood Karting, a school dedicated to karting expertise! But in the end, teamwork, dedication and hard work paid off.

Team A comprised Callum Sanderson, Oscar Buckley and Alexander Walton and Team B comprised Felix Buckley, Alfie King and Luke Walton. Team B narrowly missed out on a place in the finals, ending at the Regional Final in Newcastle. However, their efforts continued through all of the subsequent practices including visiting Warrington on several occasions, which helped Team A towards their victory! Many congratulations on such a fine achievement.



Sport Weeks Ahead

The weeks ahead are now available online.

You can [view them here](#).



NEXT WEEK ...

Disney's Beauty and the Beast

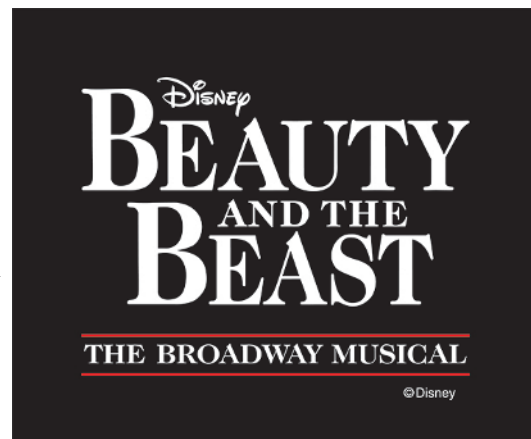
Join us to experience this "tale as old as time", performed by pupils and students of Yarm School.

Step into the enchanted world of Disney's Beauty and the Beast, the classic story of Belle, a young woman in a provincial town, and the Beast, who is really a young prince trapped under the spell of an enchantress. If the Beast can learn to love and be loved, the curse will end and he will be transformed into his former self. But time is running out.

Yarm School's production of Beauty and the Beast is kindly sponsored by Active Chartered Financial Planners and Cleveland Land Services.

Wednesday 29th June 2022 - Saturday 2nd July 2022, 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)



COMING SOON...

Paul Young

Now, on the 40th anniversary of No Parlez, he's releasing a remarkable new record and publishing his extraordinary memoir; both called Behind The Lens.

He's touring the UK, too, where he'll meet fans, sing hits and tell stories about his incredible career.

It's time to revel in the classic hits and learn the stories behind them as Paul steps out from Behind The Lens

Saturday 27th May 2023 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)



COMING SOON ...

Zog and the Flying Doctors

Zog, super keen student turned air-ambulance, still lands with a crash-bang-thump. Together with his Flying Doctor crew, Princess Pearl and Sir Gadabout, they tend to a sunburnt mermaid, a unicorn with one too many horns and a lion with the flu. However, Pearl's uncle, the King, has other ideas about whether princesses should be doctors, and she's soon locked up in the castle back in a crown and a silly frilly dress!

Most suitable for ages 3+ but all ages welcome.

Tuesday 19th - Thursday 21st July 2022

[Book Online Here](#)



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ESPORTS

British Esports describes 'esports' as "competitive gaming, human-v-human, usually with a spectator element to it". In recent years, the esports industry has grown significantly – and is expected to reach an overall worth of \$1.2 billion, with around 30 million monthly viewers, by the end of 2022. This rapid evolution has presented even more opportunities ... but, of course, opportunities usually come with a risk. Here, we've highlighted some of the potential hazards within the esports arena and suggested ways to help young people stay safe so they can make the most of this exciting space.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

MICROTRANSACTIONS

Microtransactions are in-game purchases that unlock new features or give players special abilities, characters or content. These can cost anything from 99p to £99 (and sometimes more!). The topic of microtransactions in gaming is heavily scrutinised – with cosmetics, pay-to-win features and loot boxes all being a source of contention for gamers and governing bodies in recent years.

MENTAL HEALTH

Studies show that esports competitors face the same level of mental health issues as athletes from traditional sports, along with some specific additional demands. Like mainstream professional sport, esports is an incredibly tough industry – requiring countless hours of practice. Competing at the highest level can lead to pressures such as handling setbacks, stressful situations and facing criticism.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT & BEHAVIOUR

Only 22% of gamers globally are aged between 10 and 20 – meaning the majority are adults, who might not always act or talk in a way that's appropriate for children. Like traditional sport, esports has many athletes and 'personalities' to look up to. However, it's important that your child stays aware of how influenced they are by the people they follow, and whether the athlete is age appropriate.

TROLLS & TOXICITY

An internet troll is someone who tries to offend people and cause trouble by posting derogatory comments. Toxicity, as in the real world, refers to negative behaviours like harassment, verbal abuse and inappropriate conduct, which all impact on wellbeing. Trolls and toxicity are an issue within esports, perhaps due to its pressurised, extremely competitive and high-stakes nature.

POSSIBLE EXPLOITATION

The revenue in esports is potentially vast. Organisations often look to professionals and content creators to help grow their brand, in exchange for the organisation's backing, a salary, and marketing and sponsorship benefits. However, the industry is still in its infancy – and so is its regulation. In some countries, esports isn't regulated at all, so things can get sticky if players don't know what they're doing or who they're working with.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS

The common perception of esports involves a sedentary lifestyle, an unhealthy diet and very little physical activity – which has obvious health implications. It's certainly true that players sit at their desk for hours, looking into bright screens and not getting regular exercise. Some professional esports players have nutritionists, personal trainers and dieticians specifically to protect their health.

Advice for Parents & Carers

ENCOURAGE BALANCE

Dedicating oneself intensely to any activity – including esports – can be harmful, both mentally and physically. Make sure your child's gaming routine is balanced with exercise, regular breaks, healthy food and plenty of water. If your child spends long hours gaming, using a chair with the proper supports and taking the time to practise good posture will help protect their lower back, neck and wrists.

UNDERSTAND GAMING

Chat to your child about the games they play; ask to watch or even take part to get an idea of how appropriate they are. This will give you an awareness of the phrases esports players and content creators use, helping you understand young gamers' slang. If you find some of the games unsuitable, talk to your child about why. You can also explore age-specific settings on apps like YouTube and Twitch.

GET EXPERT HELP

If your child does start on the road to becoming a professional, get in touch with an esports-specific agency who are experienced in industry terminology and loopholes. Do due diligence on any team or organisation offering your child a contract: a key point is how long your child would be contracted to them – the esports industry changes quickly, so there might be better and more secure offers out there.

BLOCK TOXIC USERS

Monitoring in-game chats, or disabling them altogether (either through the console or in the game itself), is a comprehensive way to avoid negative experiences and reduce the risk of toxic messaging. Your child also has options to block messages from particular players and only interact with their friends; this can also help to prevent them from encountering the blocked users in future games.

Meet Our Expert

Nathan David is an experienced gamer, teacher and athlete. He is Course Leader for the BTEC Esports programme at Salisbury Sixth Form College. Nathan has more than 10 years' experience working in schools and colleges, and holds a Masters degree in Sport Psychology.



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