

HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

Monday saw our CCF cadets out in force for the School's Biennial Inspection, and we welcomed Colonel Emerson to Yarm to oversee proceedings. With a full report inside, I will simply note how proud I was of the cadets for their efforts, which were acknowledged by the Colonel, both on parade in unseasonably warm weather, and also in the activities that followed. They, and the staff who enable CCF to happen, will be preparing for the forthcoming Remembrance Service and Parade, and I am grateful to them in advance for representing the School at such an important civic event.

Our assemblies this week have been fascinating and varied, with the Debating Society running our Whole School Assembly on Monday with the question 'This House believes that the only person who can improve you is you'. The whole school listened to the impressive arguments, rebuttals and answers to the judges questions with rapt attention, and everyone had the chance to vote for the team they

felt made the best arguments. The result of the pupil vote, and the judges vote, will be announced next week. Mrs Gratton talked to pupils from First to Fourth Year about - among other things - facing adversity and building resilience, and trying to retain realistic expectations when faced with the inflated 'brilliance' that social media suggests each day is for everyone else. Sixth Form pupils spoke on Thursday about the importance of and challenges faced by farmers, reflecting on food security, climate change, fair trade and more.

Assemblies are an opportunity to celebrate the success and effort of our pupils, and we have recently awarded music grades, sailing qualifications, science competition awards, reading log prizes, European Day of Languages awards and celebrated sporting success from our teams and individual success, such as a 5th place in the National Championships

in tumbling gymnastics for Beatriz. We do love to hear and celebrate our pupils' news and successes, so please do pass on anything to Tutors or Heads of Year. There is more success for our netballers described later in the newsletter - well done girls!

After the dramatic highs of House Drama, the competitive spirit takes a sporting edge this week, with House Petanque in full flow outside the Friarage! On Tuesday, which was World Mental Health Day we saw a range of bright and mismatched socks as pupils raised money for the charity Young Minds.

Dr Huw Williams



Colonel Emerson inspects the CCF

POLITICS SOCIETY LEARNS FROM POLITICAL PODCASTER

In the ever shifting landscape of media, podcasting has currently secured a significant place. Whether it's podcasts for our favourite book reviews, baking or gardening, they are certainly very much of the moment, giving us specialist insight in a portable manner.

Those podcasts devoted to politics, history and current affairs are very prominent and popular, and our guest on Friday, former pupil, David Benyon, is currently crafting podcasts in this territory. We invited David to speak to us, in part to learn about his insights into global politics, but also to share with us his best advice about how to go about podcasting, given the interest of members of the Society to explore this medium themselves.

David works as a freelance journalist as a specialist in the insurance risk market. His work involves assessing

risk for commercial ventures around the world, but very much draws from his interest in geopolitics. Having launched his new podcast a few months ago, his recent episodes have focused on the war in Ukraine and state interference in China, with forthcoming episodes exploring a potential blockade against Taiwan in the South China Sea, and the impact on Ukraine grain on food security in sub-Saharan Africa.

David shared valuable insights into the craft of podcasting, ranging from how to get started, tips on how to better package a podcast, as well as how to drive traffic, and measure one's success. The students are now hoping to explore the possibility of their own podcast, and David has generously offered his continued advice and guidance with this initiative.



Mr S Edwards

FOURTH YEAR LEARNING PERFORMANCE WORKSHOP



Fourth Year enjoyed a Study Skills workshop on Wednesday this week with Guy, from Learning Performance. They explored the power of questions, how to break habits in order to create new, better

All the pupils took away with them a booklet containing some of the tasks and information they covered in the session, to reflect on these study skills as they continue to move through their GCSE courses. We

ones, how to improve their memory skills and practical skills for revision and consolidation.

hope they will be inspired to try out some new learning strategies and feel more empowered to organise and manage their learning.

If Fourth Year pupils feel they need more opportunities to practise strategies for learning and revision, they can sign up for the Study Skills activity next term.

Mrs E Bridle

APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY: A PERSONAL STATEMENT TO STAND OUT...

We will all have read the headlines about increased competition for university places this summer and on into the future. In part due to a post-pandemic surge, as well as increased applications from international students. The number of applicants is expected to almost double between now and 2026.

There is no hiding from the fact that 'three good grades' at A Level are the crucial ingredient in securing a place, and predictions are a part of this. But the personal statement part of the application can be a critical component in securing the initial offer. It is in many ways your chance to sell yourself to the universities. Undeniably some universities pay more attention to the statement than others, but in a 'cover all bases' approach, it must be taken seriously and done to the best of one's ability.

It can be valuable to demonstrate and evidence your skills and enthusiasm. The former can be shown by a commitment to a club, sport or activity, beyond all of the opportunities that will be being offered in the classroom. So the likes of the Duke of Edinburgh Award, volunteering experience, music activities or sports teams can be very worth mentioning in this context. An applicant needs to avoid simply offering a list, but should look to link the activities to skills relevant to the course being applied for. Applicants should also avoid trying to game the

application; experiences and activities must be genuine, and when that is the case, the enthusiasm can be felt on the page. Commitment to the course is very important; demonstrating when you have gone beyond the syllabus, be it through further reading (academic journals), listening (to a podcast) or watching, perhaps pursuing an areas of interest in the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification), joining the local History Society or bird-watching club. Let the passion be explicit rather than described as passion! MOOCs (mass open online courses) can also show your curiosity to a future course as well as an ability to learn independently and outside of the classroom. University and faculty websites can also be a good source of extra guidance, offering reading lists or links to areas of current research that might interest you.

In terms of the 'language' of the personal statement, try to capture your voice, but don't be too chatty or conversational. You have a limited amount of words so be succinct and don't waffle. Avoid plagiarism and 'heavy borrowings' not least because university software will detect such practices. You will want a few people - but not too many - to read through and advise on possible alterations. Make sure you have checked carefully for any specific work experience or exams that are needed for your course of choice. There are many people at school who will be assisting you with the process, but take ownership. Personal statements can be very important; they won't win you the place, but they may get you the interview or the offer.

Mr S Edwards



Research for course and university choices

Write in a formal, succinct but natural style

Evidence your interest and exposure to the course

Go beyond the syllabus with reading, listening, watching

Avoid bad grammar, spelling mistakes and typos

Avoid flowery or artificial language

Avoid making things up

Avoid using someone else's work

Don't leave it to the last minute

CCF BIENNIAL INSPECTION



On a pleasantly warm Monday afternoon, the 9th of October, Yarm School's Combined Cadet Force (CCF) had the privilege of being inspected by Colonel Steve Emerson and the cadet training team. The afternoon commenced with a drill parade led by Sgt Jennifer Chan. As part of the parade, the cadets had the opportunity to engage in a conversation with Colonel Emerson, gaining valuable insights and experiences from his military career.

After the inspection, the cadets eagerly delved into training sessions, making use of our new Field Gun, learning how to take it apart and put it back together. Additionally, they tested their stealth and tactics were tested in the 'sniper stalk,' a camouflage and concealment challenge.

Colonel Emerson was clearly impressed by the dedication and enthusiasm displayed by all the cadets and staff during the inspection. I extend my gratitude to

all the cadets for their hard work and dedication. Special thanks also go out to the parents who were able to attend and witness firsthand what the CCF is about. Thanks as ever to the CCF team of staff for all the efforts to make these events possible.

Captain Taylor



CCF EXERCISE BLACK RAT



Last weekend, eight members of Yarm School's CCF attended the annual Exercise Black Rat event. This annual competition brought together 24 different teams from across the country, and for many of us, it was our first time participating. The competition itself took place on Saturday, with additional events like night time competitive archery on the second day.

The competition featured six stands, including but not limited to force-on-force paintball, casualty evacuation, and radio communication. Cadets had the opportunity to earn points by performing well in these activities and outperforming other teams. However, we occasionally lost points due to a lack of equipment and general dis-organisation. Despite these setbacks, we all soldiered on. Unfortunately, we didn't win any awards, but we did earn a respectable number of points, securing a middle-table position.

On Saturday night we had the night time exercise, which involved cadets sneaking from a briefing point to separate locations where we received directions. This was intense, as it was dark, lit only by enemy lights and the occasional trip flare from other teams. The enemy had set traps, creating an orange glow in the surrounding area. Additionally, we could hear occasional screams in the distance and even gunfire, all designed to keep us on our toes. Despite these distractions, we successfully reached the end without being caught. However, the enemy spotted us at the last moment and laid in wait to ambush us on the final stretch.

After an eventful night's sleep in a makeshift shelter, which can only be described as a thin layer of tarpaulin over our heads, we woke up at 6:30. We prepared and organised our gear,



cooked breakfast, and headed for the morning briefing. We took a full group photo with all the teams and also snapped a team photo with the cadets and our staff. The day's activities included a chaotic force-on-force archery game with smoke bombs and inflatables, an opportunity to interact with police officers to learn about their collaboration with the military, and a chance to examine some weaponry, including a rifle with an underslung grenade launcher and a Glock 17 pistol.

Special thanks to Lieutenant A Bridges and Captain G Bridges for accompanying us on the trip and our missions and to Mr Mist for ensuring we had all the kit we needed for the exercise.

MOUNTAIN BIKING AT SUTTON BANK

Report by Max

On Sunday 8th October, 10 students from First Year went mountain biking at Sutton Bank. After arriving at Sutton Bank, we gathered together, and went to the map of the mountain bike tracks we would be completing today. Once we had rented the bikes, we headed towards the skills track, where we would be setting lap times. When the practice laps were over, we all took it in turns to set a lap time. The fastest was 58 seconds!

Next, we started the green trail, just to get us used to mountain biking. I was surprised that we were going fairly fast, despite the fact that we weren't pedalling. Eventually, we reached some bumps, this is where we had to use the ready position (standing up on the pedals, and making no contact with the saddle) in order to keep the bike from catching the roots and rocks.

By now, we had entered the blue trail, which meant more hills, rocks, ready positions, views and speed. We made our way onto the Cleveland Way, now the hills were getting steeper, but we could cope with ease. After our lunch break, we continued down the Cleveland Way, going down a big hill in the forest. It was really exciting. Then we hit the red route. At first, we went down another less steep, but longer hill. It may have been bumpy, but this was true mountain biking at speed. At the bottom of the hill, we all agreed that it was super fun.



Next, we had to cycle back up the hill, luckily we had a break at a small tea room. From there we made our way back to the Cleveland Way which would take us back to the car park. We then did finally reach the end, but it wasn't over. We had a choice, we could go to the pump track to test our skills, or we could go to the gift shop. Some of us went to the pump track, and some of us went to the gift shop. After this, it was now over, but there are always other trips to go on. Thank you to Mr Mathers and Miss Street for giving up their Sunday, just to take us on this wonderful trip.

Max Askew, First Year

Report by Alex

Ten super keen First Year cyclists met at The Lodge bright and early on Sunday morning. Mr Mathers checked our backpacks to ensure we all had the appropriate equipment. A reasonably short journey took us to Sutton Bank where we were all allocated a mountain bike.

We set off around Mini X on the green trail, the first trail. It was full of narrow tracks and a few tight corners, an easy start to the day.

From there we followed the short stretch of road along to the Paradise Trail. Some sections were steep. Monty was the luckiest as a motorbiker gave him a push up the hill! The prize for getting up the hill was a delicious fudge. All in all a successful day out covering 22km of tracks, we can't wait for the next Outdoor Education adventure.

Alex Wormald, First Year

TEXTILES STUDENTS VISIT LONDON

Over the weekend, both Upper and Lower sixth came together for our annual Textiles residential trip. The purpose of the trip was to gather research, with the aim to expand our knowledge on designers and on today's market and society to ensure we can create a final product that is fit for the current marketplace. We began our trip with a visit to the Design Museum, taking particular interest in their current 'REBEL' exhibition, which celebrates 30 years of fashion in London and consequently how that has impacted fashion globally. Next, we travelled to The V&A, which included the 'DIVA' exhibition, which showcased the power and creativity behind the world's most iconic performances, aiming to redefine the term 'diva'. These two museum allowed us to gain both modern and cultural inspiration, which will aid us moving forward in our own designing process in terms of colour, pattern and

decoration. We then moved onto Harrods, to expand our knowledge of the high-end market, paying close attention to haute-couture fashion, designed by world famous designers. On Saturday, we ventured to The Textiles Museum, where they were showcasing a fantastic exhibition surrounding propaganda, and how fashion can be used to portray political messages. Finally, we headed to Oxford Street, to continue to further our understanding of a modern market, enabling us to explore today's trends, so we can look to create an up to date garment moving forward into the designing process. It was a fantastic and enlightening trip, and I'm sure we are all eager to take everything we learnt back into the classroom with us! Thank you to Mrs Jackson and Mrs Wright for organising such a wonderful, jam-packed trip!

Megan Kewley, Lower Sixth



ART DEPARTMENT GALLERY VISITS

This half term the Art Department has taken GCSE and A Level Art students to three different galleries. The Fourth Years spent the day at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park looking at the work of Barbara Hepworth and others. The Lower and Upper Sixth saw the permanent collection at the Tate Liverpool and finally the Fifth Years visited Edinburgh. The Fifth Years saw both the Scottish

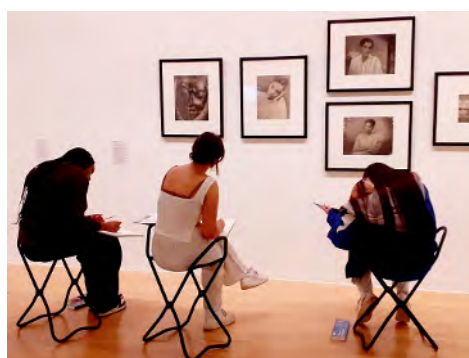
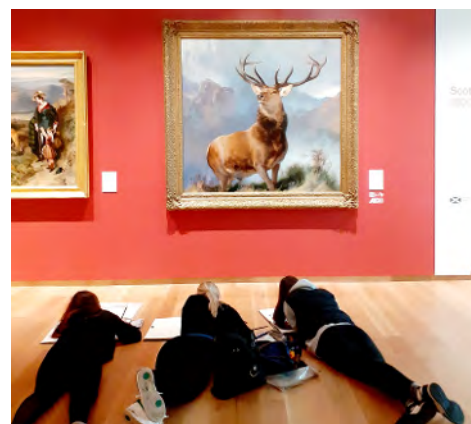
Collection and the Grayson Perry: Smash Hits Exhibition at the Scottish National Gallery.

As you can see from the photographs the pupils and students are set drawing tasks. This gallery work and the experience of seeing such a wide range of world class artwork underpins the pupils' and students' own practical work, both in their

coursework component and the externally set assignment.

All parents and friends of Yarm School are welcome to visit the end of year exhibition of GCSE and A Level work in May 2024 to see the gorgeous work our pupils & students produce, first hand. We look forward to seeing you there.

Ms E Stebbings



LONDON BOUND FOR DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS

Over last weekend, the Upper Sixth Design & Technology students took part in a highly anticipated trip to London. Arriving bright and early at Darlington train station the students were dressed to impress, kitted out in suits.

We arrived at Kings Cross and after a short walk to the hotel we were off to the V&A museum. We were given time to wander the museum and see what was on offer. There were various exhibitions that allowed us to see art through time as well as the highly anticipated Juicy Salif being a favourite of us all. After our time in the V&A we headed off to the Design Museum. This gave us the opportunity to travel on London's Underground - a first for a few of us. The Design Museum was the preferred choice for many of us with the significance it had with Design Technology and the many products it had on display that were of interest to our projects.

While at the Design Museum we got to experience artefacts that were designed to portray emotion and human feelings as well as spending some time in the cloud room and contemplating how email has changed the modern world we live in.

After the Design Museum we ventured to Covent Garden and had some time to explore what London had to offer. Our evening consisted of a meal at Nonna Selena, where Mr Spence celebrated his birthday with the whole restaurant getting involved.

Day 2 saw us heading over to St Paul's Cathedral and the Tate Modern. St Paul's Cathedral was an amazing marvel of architecture and was something that many of us are interested in as a career. We then headed towards the Tate Modern and over the Millennium Bridge. For the penultimate activity of the day, students got to take a gander at some

of the amazing artwork in the Tate Modern, discovering all ten stories and enjoying every single part. This ranged from the expensive artwork to the cinematography pieces in some rooms. It was a great experience to have, especially as it was new to a lot of students.

Finally we were allowed time around Oxford Street, to browse, wander and splash some cash as we made the most of our last activity of the weekend.

Ultimately it was an outstanding weekend with laughs, insight and overall great fun as the class bonded over new experiences and time away together.

Mr D Spence



BOOK REVIEW

FAHRENHEIT 451 - RAY BRADBURY

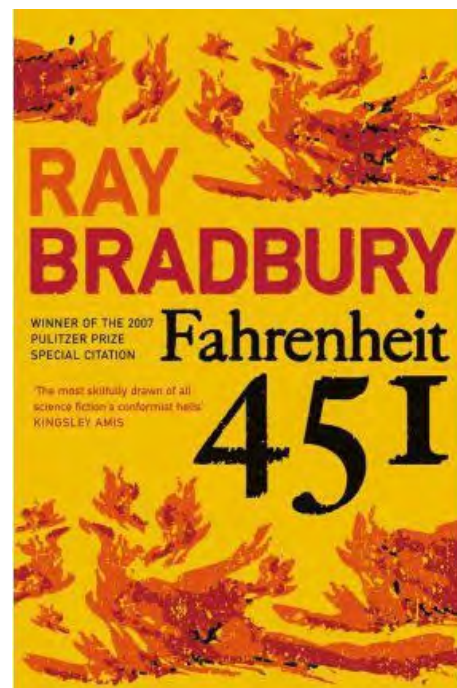
Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* provides valuable insight into a dark, dystopian future in which books are banned and burned by 'firemen' who are employed to suppress free speech and intellectual individualism, alongside the discouragement of critical thinking against what the state deems acceptable.

The protagonist, Guy Montag, who himself is one of the firemen, begins to question the oppressive regime he finds himself trapped in after he meets various people who oppose the authoritarian and restrictive regime themselves. Through this, he is exposed to the power of literature and intellectual freedom leading him to see the profound impact it can have on the human spirit. Montag's realisation of the significance of books can be encapsulated through his statement: "And I thought about books. And for the first time, I realized that a man was behind each one of the books." Bradbury effectively represents that burning books does not only oppress information and knowledge but also metaphorically 'burns' both the author of the book and those whom it would have influenced.

Perhaps one of the most influential aspects of Bradbury's work, is that despite it being set in a seemingly dystopian future, many of the oppressive and frankly worrying

aspects of the rhetoric of the book can be seen in reality throughout time. For example, not long before the publication of *Fahrenheit 451* in 1954, Nazi book burnings were prominent throughout Germany and Austria with a political "cleansing" of Jewish, Left-wing and other so-called "Un-German" literature from the libraries and schools of Nazi territories. Additionally, Bradbury's work provides further insight into other dystopian concepts that are prevalent in modern society. For example, technology plays a significant part in the novel through its connection to human relationships. Connections between television and other media and the individual have a personal feel within the novel, with Mildred (Montag's wife) using a so-called 'Converter attachment' to have her name read by the announcer. This provides relevant insight into modern issues, such as the emotional connection many viewers feel towards reality TV and the psychological transformation its viewers undergo to adapt their personalities to those they view through media. Therefore, Bradbury's work maintains a significant sense of relevance among both the modern and historic eras making it a key read for many.

However, despite the consistent dark, big brother-esque themes, the



metamorphosis of Montag throughout the story represents the potential of individuals, and eventually the whole of society to overcome state suppression. Bradbury's progressive views on censorship had a significant role, as can be seen by various quotes throughout the book; "Colored people don't like Little Black Sambo. Burn it. White people don't feel good about Uncle Tom's Cabin. Burn it" as well as the reception it received upon its publication, with various aspects of the book being censored with seventy-five passages being censored. In conjunction with the metamorphosis of Montag throughout the novel, a sense of hope is offered as once Montag manages to escape the city, albeit despite its violent demise, Montag finds himself among a society of intellectual freedom representing

BOOK REVIEW (CONTINUED)

the inevitability of the overthrow of oppressive societies, which, for example, can be seen through the social dismay in Eastern bloc states aiding the overthrow of the USSR. This therefore allows for a sense of positivity, despite the various negative themes, that even if one finds themselves in an oppressive society they do still have the means to escape it; even if it comes at a great cost.

Overall, Fahrenheit 451 provides a powerful critique of the nature of oppressive states that employ censorship, authoritarianism and the suppression of intellectualism. Bradbury not only warns against the suppression of literature but also calls upon the people to protect thought, expression and ultimately freedom as well as providing a lifeline for those such as Montag to find a way out of tyrannical practices

through intellectualism and interaction with others. To this day, the themes of Fahrenheit 451 remain relevant, with the recent banning of various books in Florida schools that contain "harmful" imagery providing an echo of 1940s-era fascism, Bradbury's work represents the importance of people to standing up to such acts to maintain democracy and freedom of expression.

Ellie Roberts, Upper Sixth

WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE GAME?

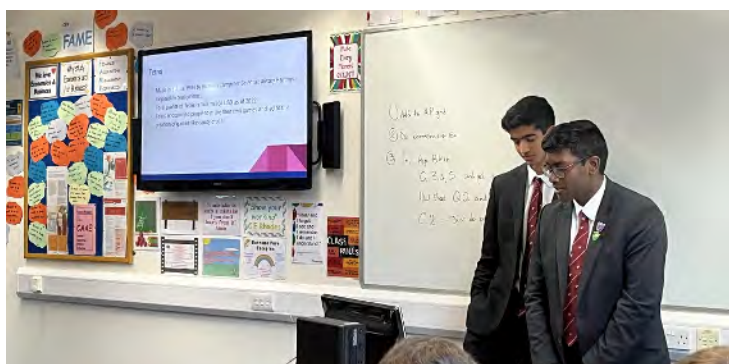
EconBus Soc posed the question and a large crowd of approximately 38 were there to hear the answer...

Ankith and Adhi gave a well received, educational and interesting insight into the Economics of Gaming, as we learnt about the vast sums of money that can be made, and the risks versus the rewards. The session culminated in a quiz with prizes.

We are as ever grateful to our presenters and delighted with our Chairs for the diversity of topics and themes being discussed.

Want to know more about the Economics and Business of anything and everything... come to B1 at 1pm every Thursday.... standing room only!!

Miss C E Rhodes



WORKING LUNCH

This week we were delighted to welcome back once again Laura Marriott (Class of 2014) to speak to those in the Sixth Form contemplating careers in Finance. Laura left Yarm School in 2014 to enter the world of work, joining KPMG's School Leaver Scheme in their Audit Department. She worked there for almost seven years, during this time earning a degree in Accountancy, as well as her Chartered Accountancy Qualification and working her way up from Assistant level to Manager level. In the summer of 2021, she made the decision to move to Haines Watts (a smaller accountancy firm), where she continues to work as an Audit Manager.

Laura was one of the first Yarm students to complete a degree level apprenticeship in accountancy and many have since sought to follow in her footsteps. She happily answered a wide range of questions relating to the realities of work and study combined, working for one of the Big 4 and contrasting a large and small employer.

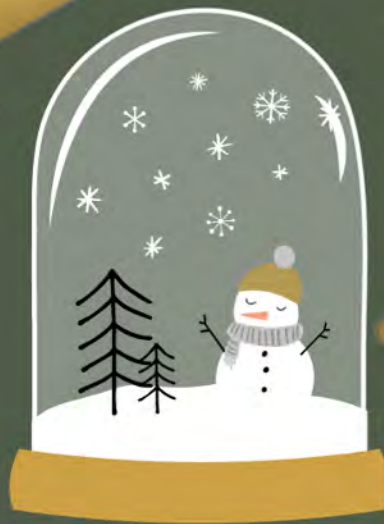
We are really grateful to Laura for coming in to share her experiences and for all the ongoing support and advice she happily offers to our FAME destined Sixth Formers. We know it won't be long til we catch up once again!

Miss C E Rhodes



YARM SCHOOL
EDUCATING FOR LIFE

Rudolph Rodeo
Children's Games,
Santas's Grotto!



Craft Stalls,
Gift Ideas,
Food & Drink

Yarm School Association

CHRISTMAS INDOOR MARKET

Saturday 18th November 2023

10am - 4pm, Yarm School

TWO SQUADS QUALIFY FOR REGIONAL NETBALL FINALS

The U14 and U16 Netball squads played in the county tournament at the weekend at Redcar Leisure Centre to qualify for the Regional National netball finals. Both teams dominated the competition winning all their games against Red House,

Barnard Castle, Freebrough, Hummersknott, and Carmel. The girls have qualified as winners of the tournament and will now play on the 3rd February in the Regional Finals.

Miss S Cottrell



SPORT WEEK AHEAD

The weeks ahead are now available online.

You can [view them here](#).

NETBALL TOURNAMENT AT ST PETERS

Both the 1st VII and the U16 teams played in an U19 invitational netball tournament at St Peter's on Wednesday 4th Oct. This was a great afternoon of netball played in great spirit and all the girls competed well against some quality sides. The U16's battled hard in their pool and eventually came 4th out of the 12 schools entered into the tournament.

Miss S Cottrell



GROUND RULES – BY ERIC CHAPPELL

Judith and Gerald look the perfect couple – he’s a successful businessman, she’s an aspiring counsellor, they live in a stylish suburban home and it seems nothing can spoil their happy marriage... that is until Jo and Ashley arrive on the scene!

Rescuing Jo from a very public argument with her boyfriend, Judith and Gerald take her home... but when Ashley follows them, it sets off a chain of events that no-one can control. Flirting and frayed tempers lead to jealousy, confessions and misunderstandings – plus a potato in the exhaust pipe!



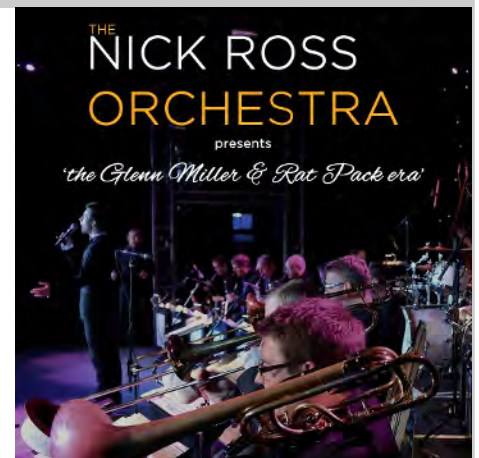
Wednesday 25th October 2023 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)

NICK ROSS ORCHESTRA

The lights soften, the mood settles. An audience waits for that first moment of sound. The Big Band is poised, relaxed, but with eyes anxious for the lead. And then, as if giving body to an echo, the murmured notes of 'Moonlight Serenade'... and the night, it seems, is suddenly full and timeless.

Recapture the sounds of a bygone era as the Nick Ross Orchestra presents 'an unmissable evening of music and song' – the Classic Big Band Sound of the 1940s & 50s.



Saturday 28th October 2023 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)

SWINGING AT THE COTTON CLUB

In the show the exhilarating dance and music of the Cotton Club is recreated by the fabulous Lindy Hop Dance Company, alongside The Harry Strutters Hot Rhythm Orchestra, featuring American vocalist Marlene Hill and compere/vocalist Megs Etherington.

Take a step back into 1920s and '30s New York City and through the doors of Harlem's hottest nightclub, 'The Cotton Club'!

'Swinging at The Cotton Club' is the action-packed show celebrating the music and dance of the Cotton Club – New York's most celebrated nightclub of the 1920s and '30s.



Friday 3rd November 2023 7:30pm

[Book Online Here](#)

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH UPSETTING CONTENT

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world currently experiencing so many uncertainties. From climate change to the war in Ukraine and the conflict in Israel, right now children across the globe can scarcely go online without being exposed to unsettling stories, images and ideas. Reassuring a concerned child can be difficult, especially when bad news feels omnipresent. We've put together some advice to help you in discussing upsetting events with young ones.

FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS

1

There are many ways that children are exposed to upsetting content in the media, both online and offline. Before swamping your child with information, find out what they know already. Show them you're interested in what they have to say, practice active listening and try to gauge how much your child has been impacted by what they've seen.



RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

2

Starting a conversation about upsetting content probably isn't the best idea when your child is studying for an exam or about to go to bed. Choose a time when they're relaxed and open to talking, to make sure you have their full attention. Remember, these conversations can become emotional, so choose somewhere your child feels safe and comfortable.



KEEP IT AGE APPROPRIATE

3

With younger children, try and keep the conversation more general and avoid leading questions and complex detail. You can go slightly deeper into the specifics with young teenagers but keep monitoring their emotional response. With older teens, you can be more open about the realities and consequences of what's happening – but again, do stay aware of their emotional state.



EMPHASISE HOPE

4

Upsetting content can make anyone feel angry, scared, sad or overwhelmed. Try to find stories of hope, generosity and strength related to the content you're discussing. Children often feel reassured when they know they can do something to help, so encourage your child's sense of control through activities which make them feel they're positively impacting the events they're concerned about.



MONITOR REACTIONS

5

All children react differently, of course, and young people might not directly say that they're scared, angry, anxious, confused or uncomfortable. Emotional reactions are natural when discussing upsetting topics, so take note of your child's body language and reactions. Allow them to express their feelings in a non-judgmental space and try to stay mindful of how they might be feeling.



CONSIDER YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

6

It's not only young people who find upsetting news difficult to process: adults also have to deal with strong emotions in moments of stress. Children develop coping strategies by mirroring those around them, so staying on top of how you appear to be regulating your emotion on the outside is important for supporting your child through worrying times.



SET LIMITS

7

Managing screen-time and content can be difficult even in normal circumstances, but especially in unusual or stressful periods (at the start of the pandemic, for example), it's virtually impossible to keep children away from upsetting content completely, but it's important to try to limit exposure by using parental controls, talking about the dangers of harmful content and enforcing screen-time limits.



TAKE THINGS SLOWLY

8

Try not to overwhelm your child with information all at once: instead, take the discussion one step at a time. You could make the first conversation a simple introduction to a potentially upsetting subject and then wait until your child is ready to talk again. Opening the door to the conversation and demonstrating that your child can talk to you about this type of issue is a vital first step.



ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

9

Online, troubling images, posts, videos and stories are shared across multiple platforms, many of which your child might access. Even if the content is actually inappropriate, encourage your child to discuss what they saw instead of being angry at them for seeing it. Children are still learning that not everything online is accurate – you want to be their ultimate source of information, not their device.



FIND A BALANCE

10

There's often a tremendous compulsion to stay right up to date with events. Our phones frequently send us push notifications urging us to read the latest article or view the most recent video on social media. It's essential to remind your child that it's healthy to take regular breaks, and to focus on positive events instead of 'doomscrolling' and risking becoming overwhelmed by bad news.



BUILD RESILIENCE

11

News has never been more accessible. While our instinct may be to shield children from upsetting stories, it's important that they're equipped with the tools to manage this content when they are exposed to it. Talk about upsetting content more generally with your child and emphasise that they can always tell you or a trusted adult if something they see makes them feel uneasy.



IDENTIFY HELP

12

It's hugely important that children know where to find support if they encounter upsetting content online. Encourage them to open up to an adult that they trust, and make sure they're aware of who their trusted adults are. It's essential that children understand that they're not alone, and that help is available if and when they need it.



Meet Our Expert

Cayley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa, which is a reporting system that is currently being used by schools and companies to fight bullying around the world. FaceUp helps give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up and get the help they not only want but need.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

