



# Eskdale School



19 January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year to all connected to Eskdale School. I hope that the Christmas holidays was an enjoyable time for everyone. Just over two weeks of the new term have flown by and I thought I would take this opportunity to share a few highlights with you.

The final piece of the Christmas celebrations concluded here last week with our postponed Christmas Concert. The inclement weather in mid-December forced the planned concert to be delayed until January, but that didn't dampen the Christmas spirit and the students performed wonderfully to a packed audience in a range of different guises. There was singing, dancing, drama and musical performance all of which enhanced the enjoyable evening which showcased our young people at their very best. Students from all year groups participated alongside members of staff and the wider community. As I said on the night itself, it was testament to their determination and that of our supportive staff that the event happened and was not just cancelled. Really well done, everyone. The strong parental support at the concert has also been seen with many kind donations of games and books to our library. Mrs Pegden, our Head of English extends her thanks to all donators. Any more you find in the post-Christmas clear-out would be welcomed!

On the sports field our 3G home pitch allowed the U16 Boys to play their county cup match on a fantastic surface. They are a talented side who play good football and I enjoyed watching them dominate the game against Ryedale to such an extent that they had a 4-0 lead when I left for a meeting with 15 minutes to go. I was therefore somewhat surprised to hear from them that they had to hang on at the end for a 4-3 win! Despite that scare, they are through to the Quarter-finals now and eagerly anticipate the draw. I feel strongly that it is important that our Year 11s continue to balance their academic commitments with other interests, whether sporting or otherwise. This sense of balance is critical in my experience.

In school we are guiding the students with the challenges of being in Year 11. Our academic support sessions are up and running now and students should take advantage of these to help their preparation for the forthcoming exams. Year 11 have also benefited from two significant careers events the last two Wednesday afternoons. Firstly, there was a carousel of activities, including CV writing and first impressions and then yesterday all Year 11s had the opportunity to have a mock interview with an external organisation. I am really pleased to report that our visitors were most impressed with our students and the way they conducted themselves. Well done to Year 11 and thank you to our careers lead, Miss Mackle who coordinated the day. There have already been plenty of opportunities in 2023 for our Year 11s to develop their skills and work on their qualifications ready for this exciting year for them all.

As you can tell from the above, it is very much business as usual here and we have tweaked a few routines and reinforced our high expectations with regards to uniform and punctuality in particular. I would like to ask for continued parental support with these aspects of school, which helps set the tone. Hoodies should not be worn around school at any time, school jumpers and/or blazers should be worn and earrings should be one simple stud with retainers in any other piercings. It is, of course, fine for students to wear coats to school and then take them off in lessons. I can confirm the whole school is now nice and warm again after a few classrooms lost central heating for a couple of days (they did have some heat!). A reminder too that students should be in school ready for registration at 8.55am. This is when important messages are shared and year group assemblies take place. Other than in exceptional situations we expect our students in on time and ready to start the day in a

positive fashion. Students who are regularly late or who are regularly incorrectly dressed can expect to be challenged by staff and if needed sanctions will follow.

Writing about high expectations brings me to a group of students who have really displayed those qualities this week. That group is our Year 9 sports leaders who have helped lead activities for a number of local primary schools. Under Mr McGovern's watchful eye, our students ran a series of sporting activities including gymnastics, which allowed a number of key stage one youngsters to enjoy themselves greatly. Well done to all involved in a really beneficial community pursuit. In addition, Our Eco Club are through the first round of a funding application process to build a £650,000 Eco Centre in Whitby. A group of students met today to start designing the site and discuss specific uses. There were some very enthusiastic and fantastic ideas flowing and we can't wait to meet our designated Relationship Manager to discuss our ideas further. We will bring you more news if we pass through the second stage of the application process.

To update you on staffing matters, I am pleased to be able to say that Miss Jess Sanderson has joined us to teach science. Miss Sanderson has experience of teaching in a number of local secondary schools in the area and as a science specialist will pick-up Mrs Tindall's lessons. She has been in this week and has already met and taught several of those classes. She is very welcome here. Mrs Tindall left Eskdale at Christmas for personal reasons and has left the classes well-placed and Miss Sanderson has been able to carry that work on seamlessly.

There is much to look forward to this term. Next week sixty-five students depart the country for the ski trip to Austria with five of our staff accompanying them. I am sure it will be a great experience and they will be ambassadors for the school while away. There will also be an opportunity for some of our GCSE PE students to work on the practical element of their course too. Thank you to the staff for organising and taking the trip and I hope the snow is good! Back here in England there is plenty going on too, like the Year 11 visit to watch 'An Inspector Calls' in York on Wednesday 8 February, whilst a number of year groups have parents' evenings, including Year 7 next Tuesday 24 January. There are more sports fixtures too with most years into the later rounds of their football cup competitions.

To close, I do appreciate that there is some noise in the background about what the future holds, but please rest assured my priority and that of my dedicated staff is the here and now for the students in our school. Have a restful weekend when it comes and thank you for your on-going support of the school.

Yours Sincerely,



P J Nicholson  
Head of School



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