



Friday 21 October 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

October half-term has arrived and it is salient time to reflect on the last few weeks here at Eskdale School. I wrote to you all in mid-September about our positive start and that has continued with high expectations in place and the students responding well to that encouragement from the hard-working staff. Routines are being embedded and the rhythm of the school is now place.

It was lovely to attend the Year 11 Parents' Evening earlier this week and meet some more parents in person. The focus of the evening was clearly on the students understanding where they are academically and what they have to do to progress and parental support for that is much appreciated. There was a positive atmosphere with students clear on their next steps as they build towards their mock exams, which begin on Monday 14 November. This half-term for our oldest students therefore needs to be a mixture of rest and revision with the time spent wisely. My experience of Year 11 has been that there is a desire to do well and as a staff body we are committed to helping the students reach their potential, whatever that might be. Our academic support sessions are running in many subjects over lunchtimes and every morning there are targeted sessions running in tutor time.

Our Year 7 meet the tutor evening earlier in the month was equally successful and again as the new head it was nice to be able to chat to parents about how the first few weeks have gone for their child at Eskdale. Our Year 7s have made a great start, that is for sure! As a school we welcome positive parental interaction. One of the ways that we as a school can continue to improve is to listen and respond to parental feedback. I would be grateful if parents would complete the short Parent View questionnaire by following this link: <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/login?destination=give-your-views>

I would also ask parents to give us their thoughts on a refined set of whole school values and whole school skills. Our whole school curriculum review is in full swing and curriculum here means everything we do, not just a list of subjects and qualifications. Staff and students have been consulted and three whole school core values have emerged as clear winners. These are: Respect, Kindness and Honesty. For our whole skills the three selected by staff and students are: Communication, Reading and Problem-solving. If parents have any views on these values and skills being adopted across the school I would be grateful if you would email using the post@eskdale-school.co.uk address. Please use values and skills in the subject of your email. The three values and three skills agreed upon by all our key stakeholders will then be adopted by the school next month and become engrained into everything that happens at Eskdale.

British politics over the past couple of months has shown us that time does not stand still, and change is a part of all of our lives. Our pastoral structure is changing after half-term to continue to evolve to meet the needs of our students. Mrs Bradley will become Head of Year 7 and Year 8, whilst continuing to be on our senior leadership team, Mr Raw will be Head of Year 9, Mrs Scales will be Head of Year 10 and Mr Raw and Mrs Scales will have joint responsibility for Year 11. Miss Wilson will continue to

provide dedicated pastoral support to the Heads of Year. Should you wish to contact your child's Head of Year, you can phone the school or email using the pastoral@eskdale-school.co.uk address. Please indicate your child's year group in the subject of your email. If your contact is a purely subject based academic one, then please contact the relevant Head of Faculty via the post@eskdale-school.co.uk email address.

Last week I represented the school at the Scarborough Science and Engineering Week Dinner. It was an interesting night and allowed me to make connections for the school to really boost our careers programme, which I am passionate about doing. Watch this space, because I am determined that our students have access to high-quality careers opportunities and we will work tirelessly to improve our provision against the national standard, Gatsby Benchmarks. Working with employers is a crucial part of this and our burgeoning relationship with Anglo American has seen our school selected to be part of the Woodsmith Education Programme which will benefit our Year 7s in its initial stage. It is an exciting time in this area of the school. I have also been out into some of our feeder schools meeting pupils and staff there and building on the successful Open Evening we hosted at the end of September. It was great to see and feel the school buzzing with excitement from so many youngsters and their families! And our students turned-up in large numbers to help make the evening a success and did that with aplomb. The next big Open Evening is at Whitby Sixth Form College on Thursday 10 November from 5-7pm with all welcome to attend. We are very much part of the Whitby Schools Partnership and I work closely with the head at Caedmon, Susan Boyd and the executive head, Jamie Henshaw on matters that affect all students in Whitby's schools. The sixth form college is there for all Whitby students, not just those from Caedmon and I am committed to ensuring Eskdale students see that as a route to carefully consider after Year 11.

There are plenty of post-16 opportunities for our students to consider and it has been great to see them taking advantage of a range of opportunities this term at Eskdale. Eco Club masterminded a lovely community event on site in late September championing a thrift approach to sustainability. You can see more about that on our website and social media pages. In sport, we are providing countless chances for our young people to experience a range of different activities. Mr Raw writes,

'The PE department have had a busy half term. Students have attended extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes and after school in football, cross country and rugby. Success so far in the district cup for Y11, Y10, Y8 and Y7 after beating Pindar and Filey. The Y11 boys have progressed in the county cup after defeating Lady Lumleys 3-1. Let's see who the boys draw in the next round! Well done to the KS3 girls who beat Scalby this week in a convincing win. A great strike on the evening by Gracie and some excellent defence work by Maisie made for an entertaining game.'

Rugby so far has seen the U15 boys come 3rd in their district tournament and last week the U14's came 4th at Scarborough Rugby Club. Player of the tournaments went to Nat and Lucas for non-stop tackling and powerful running. Cross country in both lessons and district events have seen some superb individual places and a 2nd place team score for the KS4 boys in the first district event at Scalby. Good luck to all Eskdale students competing and well done on your hard work in lessons. The fixtures and practices don't stop after half-term with the 3rd cross country event to take place and basketball, rugby and football fixtures to get involved in for all year groups. See PE staff for regular updates.'

It has been a real pleasure to see how much the students have enjoyed taking these sporting opportunities and as a keen sportsman myself, I have enjoyed going out to watch our teams (especially the U16 boys beating Caedmon!) and the Y9 sports leaders in action running the local primary schools football festival.

I wish all our students and their families a restful half-term and I would like to close by saying thank you to two members of staff who are leaving our school over the forthcoming holiday. Mrs Daley, who has most recently been working in our pastoral team is leaving us, as is Mrs Hutchinson, who works in our finance team. Both move on to other career opportunities and both have made a real contribution to Eskdale and will be missed. I saw them this morning with all the staff to wish them well and would like to echo that here. Thank you, again to both members of staff for all you have done.

Best Wishes,



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