

PRINCIPAL'S COLUMN

It is a real privilege to step up to Acting Principal. We have had a busy half term, with a number of our students focusing on their charity and fundraising work which truly demonstrates how passionate our students are to working towards our Christian value of Koinonia, meaning community. As Acting Principal I am immensely proud of our students. You just have to walk our corridors to see the exemplary manners our students demonstrate and walk into any lesson to witness the hard work and dedication they have to their learning.

January saw the release of the school performance tables. It is with great pride that I can confirm us to have a Progress 8 score of +0.46 which is above average and puts us as the third best school in Leeds. We are in the top 10% in the country for low and high ability progress. Our Disadvantaged students perform considerably better than national non-disadvantaged.



Basketball Champions



Since the beginning of the academic year the KS3 Basketball team have been competing in the Leeds school competition at Leeds Beckett University. On 23 January they were crowned the best team in Leeds winning every game they played. To make the result more impressive, it is predominantly a Year 9 competition, but the Abbey Grange C of E Academy team is made up of Year 7 and 8 boys.

Alongside this the KS3 Dance teams have made it through to the semi finals for the National Schools Dance competition. This will take place at the Victoria Theatre, Halifax on the 14 of March.

Pace & Purpose



At Abbey Grange C of E Academy we want to make sure we make the absolute most of every single lesson so students can make the maximum amount of progress possible every day. When students are late, it hinders the progress of their learning that lesson as they will miss crucial memory recall revision or key knowledge needed for the rest of the topic. At the same time we cannot risk students safety by having any running on corridors, or pushing past others, to get to lessons on time, This is why students will be hearing the phrase “pace and purpose” around school a lot more when being directed to lessons.

Pace refers to getting to lesson quickly without distractions or delay. Students should not be going to the toilet, pastoral or the water fountains during transitions. They have 5 minutes maximum to get to lesson before they are marked late so they have not time to waste. They have plenty of time at break and lunch to make sure they are ready for learning. Missing even 2 minutes of the start of each lesson means a

student has missed almost a whole lesson of learning per week, which is time they cannot afford to lose.

Purpose refers to the manner in which we transition between lessons. We should make our way sensibly, quietly and politely so we show we are moving with the purpose of getting to lesson. This will encourage our students to display professional qualities around school, so they enter lessons calmly and focused with the express purpose of making the most of their lesson. By having orderly transitions, where students move around school with pace and purpose, we will make the most of every lesson which will begin on time, start in a calm and professional way, and make the most of the learning opportunity. We would encourage parents/carers to have this discussion at home.

Sixth Form News

Post 16 League Tables

Great news for sixth form, Abbey Grange C of E Academy is top for Post 16 results in terms of Value Added, Average Grade (B-) and Average Points. That is top of **every** school in Leeds - including Private Schools.

UCAS Applications

This year has proven a very busy and successful year for UCAS applications. With 153 applications submitted many of our students have obtained excellent offers from top

Universities. Six students have offers for Oxbridge courses, from a pleasingly diverse range of subjects, Law, Economics and Management, Biology, English Literature, Psychology, and Modern and Medieval languages. Congratulations to all.

Post 16 Applications Applications

The deadline for applying for places to study at Post 16 for most places has either passed or is very soon. Most of our students have expressed a desire to stay at Abbey Grange to complete level 3 studies. However, some have applied elsewhere. If students have not yet applied, it is imperative that they do so as soon as possible.

ARTiculation

Congratulations to Zach (Year 12) for winning both our internal heat and the regional heat of ARTiculation - a national Art and public speaking competition for post-16 students. Zach succeeded against stiff competition with an emotive presentation based on Rembrandt's self portrait aged 51/53, delivered at the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester. Zach now progresses to the grand final in March held at Cambridge University.

This is a significant achievement for Zach and also the Art Department, having only entered students in the competition twice and securing finalists both times.

Rethinking Resilience—National Conference 2019

Four Year 12 students- Ben, Maedah, Sachin & Shanil went to London to play a leading role in the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership Conference on the 7 February, presenting in one of the seminars for other young leaders on the topic of Resilience.



Hopefully we will have more opportunities to showcase the talents of our sixth form students as they did the academy and themselves proud despite being out of their comfort zone. Congratulations to all four students.

Study Space

As our successful sixth form has grown in size and popularity, it was a priority to ensure we offered space for our sixth formers to work independently in a positive environment. After a busy few months, work is now complete on the new study centre and adapting the Fairbreeze room in to a sixth form only ICT room.

We have gone from having spaces for 120 students to work



independently to now having space for 200 students to work independently. We encourage our students to bring in their own electronic devices to use for independent study whilst at school



Date for your diary

A-Level Art and Photography Exhibition



Come and join staff and students of the Art Department on Wednesday 6 March (6pm until 7pm - Hibret Hall Foyer) celebrating the work they have produced in their first assessed component. All welcome.



News from the Chaplain

Present Aid

Christmas now seems a distant memory but when we returned after our break we were encouraged by the great efforts our form groups went to on the last day of term to raise money for present aid. In total we purchased: 30 pairs of chickens, 6 sheep, 4 goats, a pair of piglets and a cow as well as 10 safe places to sleep, 3 hand water pumps, 6 sets of antibiotics, 5 mosquito nets, 2 fishing kits, 2 sets of school books and bag, one pair of fruit trees and one emergency disaster kit which is a fantastic effort, totalling £1065. This was just one day after our carol service at Leeds Minster, at which students sang and spoke to re-tell the Christmas story in a wonderful affirmation of our Christian ethos.



Service Above Self

In January we celebrated the achievements of two of our Year 13 students as they were awarded the 'service above self' by the Rotary Club of Leeds. Alice and Tom have organised all our fundraising in school for the last two years, as well as fundraising themselves for child sponsorship through Compassion UK. Tom and Alice are the perfect embodiment of the idea of service above self, as they turn up every



week without fail to co-ordinate all our fundraising activities, often as many as 5 per week. This award is given to young people across Leeds every year and it is great to see our students represented so well in such an inspirational pair.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day also fell in January and all Year 11 students spent time looking at the topic of genocide and the idea of being 'Torn from Home'. As part of their response to the stories of the survivors of different genocides, students were encouraged to write a postcard to a survivor and the

responses showed the deep impact the day had on the students and will hopefully encourage those directly affected to continue to tell their stories as they receive our students postcards. It was a very thought provoking day for staff and students alike.

Year 10 were also challenged to think about stories, with 'How to be lucky', a drama presentation based on the experiences of Syrian refugees. As the actor unfolded the story of Anwar, the director stopped the drama and led discussion reflecting on questions such as 'where do we get our news from?' and 'why are we afraid of spiders?' to challenge the barriers we often put up to people who are different to ourselves. I think everyone left with a greater understanding but hopefully also a deeper empathy for the situations some people find themselves in.

National Citizenship Service

NCS (National Citizenship Service) have been regular visitors over the half term, leading assembly for Year 11 as well as a PHSCE session for Year 12. They are returning for the next PHSCE day with Year 11 so there are plenty of opportunities to find out more if students have questions, although a good number have already signed up for the summer programme. This is a four week scheme involving outdoor activities, learning life skills in university accommodation and

planning and delivering a community project. Taking part develops all sorts of skills in our young people and it is heavily subsidised so accessible to all. If you want to find out more visit www.ncsyas.co.uk and make sure your 16-17 year old doesn't miss out!

Fundraising

Year 7 have recently taken on their first big fundraising challenge with Lepra, a charity who support those with leprosy to receive the help they need and educate their communities to remove the stigma sometimes caused by the disease. Students did all sorts of activities, from sporting challenges to bake sales but a big thank you to all our students for embracing this challenge so well. So far we have raised over £1700 and there are still envelopes coming in. Students had a lot of fun with all their projects and as a reward all got the chance to join in with a massive Zumba class, which they really seemed to enjoy!

Lent & Fairtrade Fortnight

Looking forward, Lent starts soon after half term so we will be collecting food and toiletries for Food Banks, so the support of parents/carers would be much appreciated. It will also be Fairtrade fortnight and some of our students are already planning workshops to deliver at the annual celebration at the Civic Hall.

I hope your journey through Lent gives you encouragement and challenge as much as we see in our young people here, every blessing for a safe and restful holiday.

Kay Brown - Chaplain

Student Council

The student council have been busy meeting to discuss the positives and areas to improve around the academy. As always the students come to the meetings with a plethora of ideas and enthusiasm.



Bolton Abbey—Student Council members

We have decided this year that we will split into small sub groups that will focus on areas around the academy such as the environment, healthy eating and enrichment opportunities. These groups will be decided by the end of term and I look forward to working with these students moving forward throughout the year.

So far we have discussed the positives of the rewards system but also how to move it forward in the future. Some interesting ideas for instance, trading in one reward to bank towards another better reward in the future.

The dining area is a standing item we

discuss and the positive changes to reduce queuing were identified. As an academy we always pursue improvement and the new sub council will be offering key advice on this.

Finally as always the value of Koinonia is paramount. We discussed fundraising ideas for individual Abbeys and whole school. I look forward to keeping you up to date with the progress we make over the year.

Mrs Fairbrother - Achievement Director

Student Investor Challenge

The Big Apple – Here we come..... part II

We reported earlier in the year that some of our Business & Economics students were trading shares on the London FTSE with £100,000s worth of virtual money. The students were taking part in a national competition run by the London Institute of Financial Studies that involved buying and trading shares over a four month period, to make as high a return on their investment as possible. At the end of trading, one team – “The Capitalists” (Cameron, Abdul and Godwin) made it through to the semi-finals! Ranked 96 out of nearly 8000 teams, the boys returned a profit of £5,292.36 – not bad for four months’ “work”!

Important Notice

Parking and stopping outside the academy to drop off students.

As you no doubt appreciate, around the area of our academy the safety of our students is paramount. If you drop off or collect your child each day then please park a safe distance away from the academy site. Please do not drop your child off at the top of the school drive so as to not cause any obstruction or potential danger to other students, staff and vehicle users. Also, if collecting your child from an afterschool activity please park responsibly in the car parks and do not park on, or block the school drive.

Thank you.

Could Your Child Get Free School Meals ?

If you're on benefits, your child may be entitled to free school meals no matter what year they are in which could save you £420 per year per child.

Copies of Free School Meals claim forms can be requested from the General Office.

 Follow @abgacademy

 Like us on Facebook

info@abbeygrangeacademy.co.uk
www.abbeygrangeacademy.co.uk

