

KIRKBURTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020



Word from the Head

As we near the end of our first half-term of the new decade, I'd like to thank all the pupils, staff, parents and the wider community for making me feel so welcome in my new role as Headteacher at Kirkburton Middle School. Whilst the first six weeks seem to have gone extremely quickly indeed, it also feels like I've been in post much longer such is the welcoming and friendly atmosphere of the school. Despite being one of the shorter half-terms, a lot has happened since the return from the Christmas break. As part of our ongoing careers focus we've had a number of speakers visit the school. This has included talks on university life and apprenticeships as well as a fascinating presentation from a high court judge; I'm pleased to say he didn't lock anybody up- this time! Year 8 pupils have recently visited Huddersfield New College to learn more about Post 16 education. All the college staff were extremely complimentary about the high standards of behaviour exhibited by our pupils. PE lessons this term have included a strong focus on dance and it has been great to see the pupils taking part with such enthusiasm and skill. Continuing on the sporting front, we have once again been extremely successful in many of the external competitions we've entered. It's been great to meet so many parents either at the 'Meet the new Headteacher' evening at the start of term, the ski trip meeting, the online safety evening or at the recent parents' evenings. I look forward to meeting many more of you over the coming weeks. Finally, we've had a real focus this half-term on ensuring we treat each other with courtesy and respect during social times. Pupils are now well aware of our golden rule of 'keeping your hands and feet to yourself at all times' and as such break times and lunch times have become much more pleasant experiences for everybody- well done.

I would like to ask for your ongoing support with a couple of key areas within school. We are becoming increasingly concerned with the number of pupils who are coming to school in black trainers. Our uniform expectations are very clear and can be found in the school planner; it is essential all pupils return to school after half-term in the correct uniform. We would also ask that you ensure your child arrives in good time for the start of the school day at 8.55am. As part of our ongoing safeguarding drive, the school gates will be locked promptly at the start of school each day. We will also keep the main gates to the school closed at the end of school to stop vehicles entering and leaving the site at this very busy time. Despite the turning circle being extremely busy at the end of the day, we don't currently have any plans to lock the gate to the rough car park as children leave the site. We do however ask parents for their continued support and patience as staff carry out the very difficult job of ensuring over 500 children make their way home safely at the end of the school day.

Thank you once again for such a wonderful welcome to the school and I can't wait to see what the next six weeks bring.

Staffing update

We are delighted to announce that Mrs Joyce will be joining us as our new Head of PE from Easter. Mrs Joyce, who was the standout candidate from an extremely strong field of applicants, joins us from Honley High School where she currently works as a PE teacher and a school sports coordinator. Mrs Joyce has a wealth of teaching experience at both key stages 2 and 3 and she is very excited to be joining such a great PE department. We are also in the process of appointing an Assistant Headteacher to lead our ongoing teaching and learning drive- more news to follow soon. We say goodbye this week, temporarily, to Miss Charlesworth as she departs on maternity leave. We look forward to hearing from her soon. We are very pleased to welcome back Mr Barry who will be taking over Miss Charlesworth's classes after half-term.

OFSTED Update

The school continues to work hard to address the points raised in the recent OFSTED inspection. We are committed to raising standards across the school in order to ensure all pupils enjoy their learning and make great progress. Since the last update we have-

- Undergone another safeguarding inspection, our third since OFSTED visited the school. The outcome of this inspection was extremely positive and we continue to embed a culture of safeguarding across the school.
- Introduced 'discuss and debate' class time discussions which focus on a variety of topics aimed at keeping our pupils safe
- Conducted a series of subject reviews which assessed the strengths within our current curriculum and identified areas for improvement. These have been undertaken by a mixture of school staff and external experts.
- Invited governors from other schools to join and support our governing body.

Groupcall Xpressions App

In order to save money resulting from ever increasing SMS text messaging charges. The Xpressions app allows us to send instant messages to parents for free and works in a similar way to Whatsapp and other online messaging services.

All general messages will soon be sent using the app so we ask parents download this to their phone. Please contact school if you need support with this. We may occasionally still send SMS text messages however this will usually be when we need to be sure all parents see a message quickly such as school closures or cancelled sports clubs.

Chess Club

KMS Chess club has again entered the Delancey National Chess Tournament. The first round of the tournament is played in school. Each week the chess club members play each other and earn points for a league table. As they gain points, prizes are awarded each week. At the end of the tournament there is a trophy awarded to the best player in each year as well as certificates to all who participated. Those players with a high enough score are entered into the regional finals held at Saddleworth High school. The tournament also has further rounds held in Manchester and a grand final in London.

The KMS chess club is open to all pupils who wish to play/learn Chess. We meet once a week at lunchtime to play friendly games and learn to improve as chess players. If any pupil wishes to join the club please see Mr Parker in B2 where they will be warmly welcomed.

Parent's forum

We recognise good communication with parents is crucial to our success as a school. We are therefore establishing a parent's forum to help support our school improvement work.

Our first meeting is on Thursday 12th March and we will send a letter out after half-term with further details.

Absence reporting

Please can we remind parents to telephone school to report an absence by 10:00am, if your child is unable to attend due to ill health. **You must do this for each day of absence.** We will contact home where children are not reported absent but are not in school in order to ensure they are safe and well. This can take a long time, so we would be grateful if parents could adhere to this process. New guidance states that if we cannot contact a parent/ carer, we may need to do a home visit or report to Police for a welfare check. We are very grateful for parents support on this matter.

Term time leave

Reflecting national concerns around attendance, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (now the Department for Education) issued revised guidance in October 2007 and June 2013 strengthening the view that as a general rule, children should not be taken out of school unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'. Please see our attendance policy for further details.

Name the Koala

After half-term Henrietta will be running a 'guess the name of the koala' competition. Entries cost 50p and all monies raised will be donated to the Australian Red Cross to support victims of the Australian wild fires. As well as being an animal lover I have family in Australia. I wonder who will win the cute koala?

Careers Update

It has been an exciting time for Kirkburton students as we have launched our new careers programme. We have been working very hard to give the students lots of useful information that will help them with their decisions for the future in the world of work.

We have a new area in the library called the Careers Corner – Students can learn about great industries in our local area (Labour Market Information) and the websites they can visit to find out more about universities and different careers. There is also a bookcase crammed full of booklets and leaflets for the students to take home to look at.

Students should be starting to notice all the Careers displays in the classrooms – to give them an idea of all the fantastic jobs you can get linking to different subjects in school.

Our Future Goals booklets have gone out to parents – they show the growing industries and the enormous range of jobs to be had in the future.

All our students have had interesting and stimulating assemblies about where to find information and who their head of Careers is (Mrs A Greenleaf), what is an Apprenticeship and Careers in the Creative industries.

We are not expecting our students to have definite ideas of a career at their age but we feel strongly that all our students should have lots of useful information to help them make the right decisions later.

We have a very exciting time to come this year. Our Year 7 students are lucky enough to go to an exhibition at Magna Sheffield called Get up to Speed. Get up to Speed with STEM is a chance to see some of the UK's most exciting science, technology & engineering inventions, and meet the people who design, build and operate them! The students will speak to a host of businesses, inventors, apprentices and education providers on the future of these industries, at this showcase event.



Our year eight students are going on quite a few visits this year to really help them with the decision making process when they get to Shelley and take their options.

We are going to visit Huddersfield New College – which is an extremely popular 6th Form college with the most amazing facilities.

During the Huddersfield University visit we get to see places like the amazing music department, a mock up court room and what the bedrooms in the student accommodation look like.



Further to our recent assemblies in school we have asked pupils to complete the link below:-

<https://forms.gle/ttnuw5K2ybH5ajmm7>

1. Did you find the assembly on creative industries interesting?
2. Has this assembly given you some ideas for the future?
3. Did you understand the Apprenticeships assembly?
4. Do you think the information you are getting for careers is useful?

Many thanks in advance for your feedback.

Upcoming dates

Thursday 5th March- Year 7 Parents evening
Tuesday 10th March- Year 7 Parents evening
Thursday 12th March- Parents' Forum
Monday 30th March- Year 7 French trip departs
Friday 3rd April- Last day of term before Easter holiday
Saturday 4th April - School Ski trip departs



Lunchtime Clubs

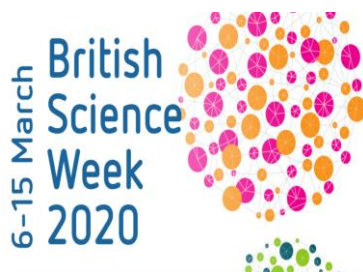
Monday- Warhammer
Tuesday- Chess Club
Wednesday- Rock Guitar/Chess Club/Year 8 Football
Thursday- Garden Club/Drum Club & Year 7&8 Netball
Friday- Craft Club/Pop Choir /Languages Club & Year 7 Football
Homework Club and Quiet Club are daily

Afterschool Sports Clubs

Monday – Dance & Table Tennis
Tuesday – Year 6 Gymnastics
Wednesday – Year 6 Hi-5 Netball/Girls' Football
Thursday – Basketball/Year 7&8 Netball

Science Club

We will be starting Science club from 6-15th March until the end of the year. We will also have some events on in Science week including Professor Brainstorm, we look forward to seeing you there. Miss Sharples and Mrs Davies.



Wellbeing

Wellbeing Ambassadors work with pupils and staff across the school, supporting, helping and acting as a voice for your fellow pupils. Wellbeing Ambassadors are seen as role models in school who other pupils feel comfortable to talk to.

As a team we will meet once every 3 weeks to discuss pupil's voice, any concerns and make suggestions and plan events to promote pupil's wellbeing.



PE

It has been another extremely successful half-term for KMS sport, with plenty of children representing the school in various sports.

Football has been as popular as ever throughout the school; despite the weather's best efforts to sabotage fixtures and practices, there has still been lots of football played.

The year 6 and 7 Inter-House competitions saw children turning up in huge numbers at lunchtime as they represented their respective houses. After several closely contested rounds, it was Green House who were the eventual winners of the year 6 tournament, with the year 7 final still to be played at the time of writing!

Away from this, the pupils who were selected to represent the school have done so with an abundance of desire and passion. With plenty of talent on show it has been immensely difficult to choose squads for the tournaments we have taken part in.

On 8th January, the year 6 team competed in the 7-a-side football finals in Leeds. It was a huge achievement to even get there, with the boys doing fantastically well and finishing in second place.



On the 16th January, the year 7 boys were crowned U12 Huddersfield Futsal champions, beating Huddersfield Grammar in the final. They showed fantastic attitude and sportsmanship, playing the game in the spirit it should be played.



Sports-hall athletics continues to be one of our sporting strengths at Kirkburton Middle, and the start of 2020 has been no different.

On 16th January, our year 8 boys and girls teams won their first competition of the year at Newsome High School, displaying great effort, behaviour and camaraderie.

As did the year 6 team on 20th January...

Along with the year 7 team on 30th Jan!!

This meant that both the boys and girls teams from all three age groups progressed through to the Kirklees Finals at Leeds Road on Friday 7th February.

This proved to be a fantastic day for everyone involved. Year 6 competed fiercely in a great event, against incredibly strong athletes to earn a superb second place.

The year 7 and 8 girls' teams both came runners up, with the year 7 and 8 boys' teams finishing the day as champions.

It was an enthralling competition, with our success meaning that all teams have again qualified for the next round; the West Yorkshire Finals on 17th March at Huddersfield Leisure Centre. All the children should be immensely proud of themselves.

Congratulations to all pupils who have been involved in school sport this half-term; we hope that both the participation levels and success continue after the holidays!