"DON’T LIMIT YOUR CHALLENGES. CHALLENGE YOUR LIMITS."

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Dear Parents/Carers,

This has been the shortest half term for many years and the busiest. Our Year 11 pupils have completed all their practical examinations in creative subjects, PE, 3D and Photography, and have started their hall based exams.

Year 10 have also begun their end of year exams to provide them with the practice and experience of sitting examinations in the exam halls. This has been helped by the creation of our third exam space: North Hall. North Hall is in a quiet location in the campus and provides a calm environment to take exams.

Once again I would like to take the opportunity to remind parents that it is important for pupils taking exams to revise without the distraction of television, mobile phones or computer games.

It is helpful for most pupils to revise by rewriting notes and underlining key words and phrases to help them remember the information. Revision materials can be found on the web-site in Foldr, your child has the login details. In addition all pupils were issued with a revision guide for each subject to ensure they achieve their very best.

Please remind your child that it is impossible to remember everything in one go and that they should revise in small chunks. In this way they will build their knowledge as each day progresses. Please ensure that your child sleeps well with no late nights during the exam period and that they keep hydrated.

We know that we have talented pupils at this school please help them to get the best of their education so that they can get the best out of their future working lives.

Mrs A Andersen
Headteacher
On Monday 4th March 2019, we had Bali Rai come in to discuss the importance of reading with the Year 7s. The Leicester based author had the Year 7 engrossed in his session. The session engaged the students as a number of complex and interesting ideas were explored such as race, culture and the complexities of youth.

During the session, Bali was neither trying to be hyperbolic or entertaining as he doesn’t need to. The students appreciated the fact that an adult could discuss the elements which make up their identities without dramatizing it. They simply listened to his speech and soaked up his thoughts and beliefs like a sponge.

Bali Rai has a diverse range of novella and novels he has written. Topics range from culture, history, love and sports. His target audience are 11-18 year olds and he caters his writing for a range of audiences. This makes his writing inclusive as there is something for everyone.

During one of the workshop, a select few students had the opportunity to speak to Bali Rai one to one and to probe his process and inspiration for writing. The workshop focused on creative writing and the students took advice from Bali and implemented it into their work.

Furthermore, Bali gave students feedback on how to engage audiences. The students highly benefited from the visit and it was clear that they all enjoyed the time Bali spent with them. The event was a great success due to excellent student behaviour and staff support.

Miss N Akhtar
Teacher of English
LONDON BASED RAPPER AND POET VISITS YEAR 8s

On Thursday 14th March 2019, Breis, a London based rapper/poet, visited Year 8s to discuss the importance of identity and self-confidence. They were engaged and excited during the session.

During the session, Breis spoke about the history of rap, his inspiration and the process of writing his lyrics. The year group were very interested in hearing and understanding the routine. Breis has published his own collection of poetry and lyrics which include a range of different topics and genres to engage and inspire young people.

One of the workshops focused on poetry and rap. A few students had the opportunity to speak to Breis one to one and probe his process and inspiration for writing. The workshop was challenging allowing the students to stretch and encourage them to think about their feelings.

The students responded well to this as they all managed to implement poetic devices and meet the challenge(s) set. Two students successfully created a freestyle rap using a range of words which didn’t necessarily go together. All the students responded well to this.

Year 8s highly benefitted from the visit and they all enjoyed the time they spent with the rapper/poet.

Miss N Akhtar
Teacher of English
SECOND PLACE IN THE DEBATE MATE CUP 2019

A team of debaters from Years 7 to 10 travelled to the University of Birmingham on 19th April 2019 to compete in the final round of the Debate Mate Cup. The Debate Mate Cup is a regional competition in which schools all over Birmingham compete in a series of formal debates encompassing a wide variety of controversial topics – from whether as a society we should have a right to privacy on social media, to whether pupils should be allowed to choose their school’s head teacher by a democratic vote!

The team showed a real confidence and maturity in their debating skills, against considerable competition from other schools. They worked together to create thoughtful, well-considered arguments and presented those arguments in a convincing and clear manner. The competition was fierce, but their dedication and hard work paid off as the team scored enough points to compete in the final show debate onstage against rivals Shireland Collegiate Academy.

Unfortunately, our pupils narrowly missed out on the grand prize – the Debate Mate Cup – but they finished in second place overall and were an absolute credit to the school.

Until next year – well done, Debate Maters!

Miss C Beaumont
Teacher of English

STEPHEN KELMAN VISITS YEAR 10s

On Friday 3rd May 2019, author Stephen Kelman visited the school to run a session with Year 10 students. The session consisted of a Q&A with a teacher, using pre-planned questions before giving time to students to ask him questions about his novel ‘Pigeon English’, which is used in the English Literature GCSE course.

Mr Read and Mr Kiembi were the acting interviewers for each session, providing an entertaining atmosphere to engage students, as they noted down Stephen’s responses to aid their revision notes. Stephen provided insightful ideas and responses which guided the students’ annotations of Pigeon English.

10E1 and 10W1 English sets were given the opportunity to take a photo with the author before some time was taken out to get their copies of the novel signed. The session proved a success and students were overwhelmed, having the ability to ask a real-life author any questions they desire.

Stephen was pleased to have been able to return to the school to help the students and expressed his desire to return the following year. As always, a pleasure to receive the great author and person, who we look forward to work with again.

Mr Z Rafi
Teacher of English
IFTAR FOR THE FUTURE

On Tuesday 8th May 2019, two Year 9 students represented Hodge Hill College at an 'Iftar for the Future' (a plastic free Iftar with a focus on the environment) at St Peter’s Church in Hall Green.

Jaffar Shah and Anees Mahmood were members of the team that won the National Solutions for the Planet competition last year. They gave a speech to the people at the Iftar about why the environment was important to them and how their ideas to reduce plastic in the school canteen had been successfully implemented in collaboration with our catering providers. They also had the opportunity to discuss with other young people how to take their ideas further.

Jaffar and Anees were excellent ambassadors for the school and thanks to Mrs Clowes for accompanying us.

Mrs J Weir

Leader of Aspiration: Humanities