

Head of School's Weekly Update 05 February 2021

FROM THE HEAD

Thank you to all students and parents/carers for your continued support. We really appreciate the collective effort to maintain engagement with the daily routine and live lessons. In this week's bulletin we hope you enjoy reading about some of our extra curricular initiatives in school which we are continuing to run.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

This week has been Children's Mental Health week with a focus on 'Express Yourself'.



The children have been engaged in a variety of activities designed to promote emotional and mental health awareness with opportunities to express themselves through things like origami, dance and other creative themes. There has also been a cross curricular commitment through subjects like MFL, English, LIFE. Feedback from the students has been very positive and they have said that they are more aware and focussed on promoting their own mental health and wellbeing.

SAFEGUARDING



Tuesday 9th February is Safer Internet Day 2021. The day is celebrating the amazing range of information

and opportunities online, and its potential to inform, connect and inspire us, whilst also looking at how young people can separate fact from fiction. The campaign focuses on how we can decide what to trust online, supporting young people to

question, challenge and change the online world for the better. It will explore how influence, persuasion and manipulation can impact young people's decisions, opinions and what they share online. The day will also look at the emotional impact navigating a misleading online world can have on young people and why it is important to create a supportive, critical and questioning culture online that encourages debate and discussion. We want to give young people the skills to support one another and the strategies to spot and speak out against harmful and misleading content online.

SIXTH FORM NEWS

Next week we have a Sixth Form Taster Day for Year 11 students. If students have not confirmed their choices yet please see Miss Robson or Mrs Redpath. Due to the taster day Year 12 and Year 13 students have a reading day on Friday 12th February.

HOUSE CHALLENGE - MEGA MARATHON

The Mega Marathon House Challenge kicked off this week, encouraging students to increase the amount of physical activity they do during the full month of February. Undertaking regular exercise is proven to have an advantageous effect on wellbeing, which is so important.

During Monday's tutor time, form tutors will ask students for the distances that they have covered (walk, bike, run) during this week (01/02 - 07/02). Record your distance on a smartwatch or an app for your smartphone. The winning house is decided by total distance covered over the duration of February. An update on total distances from each house will be posted on our social media pages and in the next weekly update.

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

The Duke of Edinburgh's Silver Award was launched with our Year 12 students last week. This is a polite reminder that students who would like to undertake the Silver Award, must complete the Google Application Form - found on the Year 12 Google Classroom - by Friday 12th February.

YEAR 7 SHORT STORY CLUB

This week's remote Short Story Club saw our members create their own 100-word mini-fictions about something spooky, inspired by our reading of Edgar Allen Poe's *The Tell-tale Heart*! Check out some of their efforts on the school's Facebook page, if you dare...

YEAR 7 BIG GARDEN BIRDWATCH

On Friday 29th January, students at school in the Year 7 pod took part in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch.

Earlier in the week the students had set up feeding stations with a variety of different foods to attract the birds.

The children took turns identifying and recording the birds that visited. We were surprised by both how many birds there were and the variety, we saw blackbirds, blue tits, chaffinches, coal tits, great tits, sparrows, robins, collared doves, even a dunnock and a goldfinch! One of the students, John, said, "The bird count was fun! I can recognise different birds now. Can we do it again next year?"



LIBRARY BOOKS

If you would like a bundle of books please email me with some suggestions of what type of books you would like to read. You must be able to collect them from C Block Reception My email is brayshaw.c@northallertonschool.org.uk

ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

We have again had a phenomenal **98.4%** of students attending online lessons last week, and as a consequence sent a record number of positive messages home to students. A huge congratulations to you all and with one week to go, please keep up the great work!

Finally, we thought it might be helpful to provide students and parents with some tips to assist with managing learning online:

1. Routine is important - ensure learners set up their day with a regular routine that is followed.
2. Create a regular study space - this will help to keep learners organised.
3. Eliminate distractions - where possible work in an area that is quiet and does not have any tempting distractions e.g. television.
4. Take regular breaks - staring at a computer screen for prolonged periods is not healthy, so make sure learners find time for 5-10 minute breaks between lessons.

BRILLIANT CLUB

The Brilliant Club has now ended. Seven Year 12 students were picked to take part in this exclusive opportunity which involved each student completing a 2500 word essay at university standard on the topic of medieval fairy tales. The students have now all completed their essays and are now awaiting their feedback and results. Students will be graded with university classifications i.e. 1st class, 2:1, 2:2 or a third. Under normal circumstances each student would have formally graduated from the process and awarded a certificate for their efforts. We are incredibly proud of all the students that participated and we wait eagerly to see their results. A big well done to all.

HEAD OF SCHOOL WEEKLY UPDATE

We hope parents are enjoying reading our new Head of School Weekly Update newsletter. As always, we welcome your thoughts, suggestions and feedback. Please do get in touch if you have any feedback on this or if there is anything you would like us to include as a regular feature. Please send any emails to Anna Wilson on wilson.a@northallertonschool.org.uk Thank you.