

A message from the Headteacher:

With winter hopefully behind us and some spring like weather in the last few weeks it must nearly be time for the exam season! Parents will be well aware of the changes that are currently taking place in the exam system and the impact it is having on our young people and the colleagues in school. In simple terms much more now rides on the examinations at the end of the course and less on assessment through the two years of GCSE. This change will continue over the next few years and it means we have to support and prepare our students for a different set of challenges to those faced by young people in the last few years. The response of the current Year 11 students and the staff who work with them has been fantastic and this will continue over the next few vital weeks with many students and staff in school during the Easter and May holidays ensuring everyone is as well prepared as they possibly can be. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the year 11 students the very best of luck for the next few weeks.

On the subject of Year 11, we are looking forward to their Prom on June 26th and our first ever visit to the Bay of Naples in Italy, to see Vesuvius and Pompeii in early July. Year 7 also have their residential coming up in the next few weeks and over 60 Year 8 pupils returned from their trip to Paris during half term. With Year 9 visits to Carlton Lodge and London coming up in the summer term and the recent visit to Uganda by two students in Year 10 York High pupils are clearly clocking up a lot of miles!

As you will see elsewhere in the newsletter we also clocked up a lot of seats and sore bottoms for Sport Relief on Friday 21st March when we managed to 'sit' on a quarter of a million chairs!

With the warmer weather hopefully coming along I would just like to remind everyone about our uniform policy. Pupils must continue to wear their jumpers to school and staff will give them permission to remove them when it is appropriate and pupils must continue to wear school shoes, plimsolls are not acceptable. In short the uniform policy has not changed! Thank you for your support with this as we are so very proud of the smart appearance of our young people.

Finally Mr Fitzsimons will be leaving at the end of term to move to a promoted post in Leeds. Mr 'Fitz' as he is fondly known has done a great job at York High in PE and especially in the Society and Health and Sport Diplomas gaining some fantastic results. He has also done a lot of work with our young people about Health and Well Being. We will miss him but wish him well in his new role.

Have a great Easter Break



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*Gold Partner
2012/13*



Chair Challenge

Quarter Of A Million Chair Challenge

Inspired by Shearer and Savage York High School set out at the start of Friday 21st March to sit on a quarter of a million chairs. Many said it could not be done many others could not understand how it would be done. This is what happened last Friday at YHS. After an early start on Radio York the students arrived to find the 200 assembly chairs set out on the playground. Throughout the day every student in the school sat on all of the 200 chairs. The students were fantastic with some standout stars such as Mark Pollard with 4200 and Georgia Whitley with 3000. It was not only the students with many members of staff joining in, Mrs Mackay the self titled oldest member of staff did 1200. The entire catering team did their 200 as a team and the admin staff also emerged with credit. Mr Pattinson deserves a mention as he had forgotten it was non uniform day and looked very smart in professional business attire!



During the afternoon the whole school brought chairs out from the school and lined up on the playground. To the beat of a drum we then all sat and stood 50 times. The remarkable thing was that whilst we were outside we had rain, sleet and bright sunshine.

The final total 311,750

Mad but memorable – Makes you proud to be from York High School



Bags2School

Well Done

Bag2School Fundraise for School funds. We are holding our next collection 12th May 2014 ready for anyone having a spring clear out.

We can take the following items for re-use:

Adults and childrens clothing, bedding, soft toys, paired shoes, hats, belts and hand-bags. NO BRIC-A-BRAC PLEASE.



A big congratulations to Luke Fawcett, a GCSE Graphic Products pupil of Year 10 who was a joint winner of the City of York Council, SACRE logo competition. The standard of applications was very high and the final winners will have their winning designs featured on future publicity and the new Agreed Syllabus.

Well done Luke!

Mrs Underwood



Blue Skies

The Blue Skies programme for Year 8 is now well underway. This is a programme in which we have been chosen to take part, in partnership with the RAF. 15 Year 8 pupils have been selected and have already done two of the sessions for this year. They began with a session in school, where they looked at the programme and what they would be doing on it.

It has meant they have had to do some work though, as we are meeting once a week in afternoon registration to complete the paperwork including evaluations that they have to do. At the end of the programme they have the chance to gain a BTEC Workskills qualification, but have to produce a portfolio about their experiences in order to pass. This gives them the chance to reflect on what they have learnt including the recording of their own thoughts and reflection, which is never easy to do.

The second session saw them going out for the day to RAF Linton on Ouse. They all enjoyed this very much, having been on a tour of the station, seeing an acrobatic aerial flying display and sitting in a cockpit themselves. The accompanying photographs have some great scenes of hard work and concentration during team activities as well as smiley faces beneath air crew helmets!

So far the pupils have thoroughly enjoyed their experiences and are very much looking forward to going out for the day again.

Dr E Smith

Year 8 Leader



York High School's Shakespeare Success!

The YHS Shakespeare Ensemble impressed and inspired their audience with an outstanding piece at the York Theatre Royal 'Responding to Richard' festival. The festival (which was on Thursday the 27th of February) involved seven schools from across the city, all working within the Royal Shakespeare Company's 'Learning and Performance Network', of which YHS is the 'hub school'.

Students spent the day at York Theatre Royal in dress rehearsals and health and safety briefings, before performing in front of a live audience on the main stage! Students really enjoyed themselves and especially delighted in watching the performances from the other schools.

The ensemble is currently in rehearsals for our end of year production: *Twelfth Night*. We look forward to seeing many of you at the performance!



Poetry

Poet and Radio 4 broadcaster Kate Fox came into school on March 12th to perform some amusing poems and inspire some of our Year 9 and 10 students to write poems designed to be performed. The students had fun in the workshops and wrote some fun pieces including one about a snail, and another poem about music and what it means to them. Two students were selected to perform in the final performance competition on Sunday 30th March in the museum gardens Tempest Anderson Hall, with Kate Fox and contestants from all the other secondary schools in York. Well done to Eleanor Gibson and Xenedra Greenwood in Year 9 for their fantastic writing and performing, and good luck to them in the final!

Netball

On Saturday 8th March the Year 8 girls competed in a Netball Tournament at Joseph Rowntree School. The girls have been preparing for this tournament since September and when playing, it was clear to see how much they have progressed. The girls won their first two games, beating Millthorpe and Joseph Rowntree but unfortunately lost the three games to follow, although all games were very close. To say it was such a cold morning the girls gave 100% and were a credit to the school, with regards to their effort and sportsmanship. The special mention goes to the whole team for playing so well together, and never giving up, we narrowly missed out on getting to the next round.

**Yr 8 in Paris**

On a frosty, freezing Wednesday morning over sixty Year 8s, their parents and seven very cold staff arrived at school. It was 6.30am and everyone was shivering, despite coats, hats, scarves and gloves!

It was a long drive to Dover, with a stop for breakfast and to change drivers. Everyone was very grateful for a hot drink and a MacDonald's Mac-Muffin! Then it was back on the bus and off to the ferry port

Unfortunately the weather was not good and, as we approached the ferry terminal, it became obvious that we were going to have to wait. The sea looked very choppy (understatement of the day!), it was blowing a gale and raining hard, but the pupils were relatively patient and eventually we boarded with some trepidation. We managed to have a walk around before we set off, but it very quickly became a nightmare with most of the group in the toilets for the majority of the journey, including me! The staff on board were fabulous, however, and even let Luke Franks have a shower and put on some clothes that they had spare!

The French countryside was soon replaced by the outskirts of Paris and, apart from one diversion which confused things somewhat, we did eventually arrive at the 'Explorers Hotel'. We were very late, after midnight, but the staff were helpful and we quickly got to our rooms. They were really nice, clean and modern and we got settled in, three or four to a room. We were mostly along one corridor so we couldn't get lost!

Up the next day, helped by an early morning call by the teachers, we had a buffet breakfast at the restaurant before heading for Paris. The driver asked if I would do some 'tourist guide' stuff on the microphone and we drove round the city seeing all the great sights: up the Champs-Elysees so we could see the Arc de Triomphe, Le Louvre and around the Place de la Concorde. We stopped here, as there was a huge 'Paris eye' ride which some of the group wanted to go on. There was also a 'snack' kiosk where we devoured crepes and waffles with lots of melted chocolate and bought some souvenirs and presents. We then drove to the river, just near the Eiffel Tower where we had a boat trip down the Seine. The boat was huge with large windows and a (very cold) area outside, but we got a great view of the city. There was commentary to tell us about the history of the buildings and bridges and it gave us a good overview of how the city was laid out.

That evening the coach took us up to Montmartre for dinner. We did pass through some interesting areas of the city, including driving past the 'Moulin Rouge', and we had a steep climb up to the 'Sacré Coeur' as our restaurant was in the famous artists square behind the cathedral. The meal was very nice, although some preferred their choices of food more than others! It was quite an experience to try speaking in French and having waiter service in a proper restaurant. After the meal, the coach driver managed to park up so we could see the Eiffel Tower at night and we all watched as the lights on it flashed to mark the hour.

Another early morning start found us getting the shuttle bus to Disneyland. The weather was cold and wet, but we were all wrapped up to keep warm! The pupils were all very excited as we walked down to the entrance of the village and gave instructions as to where staff would be and where and when to meet. The pupils had tickets for both the theme park and the studio park and went off in small groups to have fun. They came back to check in with bags of souvenirs and big smiles, as they were enjoying themselves so much. The day flew with so much to do and see, but we did eventually make it to the Rainforest Café for our evening meal, which was delicious! We then went back into the park for the firework show, which was amazing and much better than most of us thought it would be! The Cinderella Castle was lit up beautifully!

The next morning we had to go down to breakfast before packing and getting ready to leave. Before heading to the ferry, we did a detour and went to visit a small chocolate factory. It was situated in a tiny, pretty village and was family owned and run. They showed us how the chocolate was produced from the cocoa beans and then how the different moulds worked to make the delicious chocolates. They demonstrated how fillings were added and how the individual chocolates were made as well as how larger bunnies and other shapes were created. We all got samples to try and then went to their little shop to buy our own! They were all absolutely delicious!

We settled down for the drive home. The weather was still awful and we heard that the ferry port at Dover had been closed that morning for six hours! However, at Calais, they allowed us on an earlier ferry. The crossing was appalling again and many of us were really ill. This was made worse when we had to stay in the squally sea for an extra one and a half hours until there was space for us in Dover Harbour!! It was clear that we were going to return much later than expected and we ended up not home until well after midnight. We were all tired but had many good memories and photographs to share.

Dr E Smith
Yr 8 Leader

**Netball**

The 2013/2014 season has been steady throughout but with an explosive ending for the Year 7 YHS Netball team. We started the season with a six week training block to get to know the players and what their best position would be. Some students had not played netball before so it was a steep learning curve for them. We currently have a squad of around 11 girls who each week have trained hard and been really committed to training and fixtures. It would be fair to say that we had more losses than successes this season but dig deep they did at the York & Selby Schools Netball tournament last Saturday at St Olaves, here they got their reward for their commitment. We went through the B rounds with one loss, two wins and one draw. This was enough to secure our place in the semi-final! However, there was one blip..... I calculated the goal difference wrongly and sent all of our devoted parents' home, thinking we had not got through! We played the semi-final against St Olaves who played well and took the victory so we didn't get through to the final but I was so proud of the girls for battling hard in the rounds and being rewarded with a semi-final spot.



Just prior to the York & Selby Schools tournament the girls also represented York at the School Games. We played hard and fast against teams from Harrogate, Richmond and Scarborough amongst others. Although we didn't get through to the semi-finals at this competition, we had a great day! Although the season is now over, we still have some fun to come our way.

This week all the girls will get their YHS Netball Team hoodies and in May we go on our Netball Tour! A three day residential with netball galore! Well done girls on a great season, your game has improved and your attitude to training and fixtures is excellent. Bring on next season!

Ms Evans
U12 Netball Manager

**175 Faces Of Chemistry**

Mrs Alexander was selected to be one of the 175 Faces of Chemistry as part of a national campaign to celebrate 175 years of the Royal Society of Chemistry. Mrs Alexander was interviewed and photographed with her Y11 class. The Article goes into where her passion for Chemistry came from and the difficulties she faced when completing her studies, and following the choices she made to teach.



I love to see the lights coming on in young minds. I never tire of it.
I love finding ways to engage students who are determinedly uninterested.
I love the searching questions from the keen; the challenges to prove what I say. The 'way out there' ideas they have. I love talking to people who haven't made their minds up about anything yet. It is a challenge and a great responsibility.

She closes the article with:

Study what you love; seek knowledge and understanding for its own sake. Be the first if you must; you will not be the last.

Full article can be found at:

<http://www.rsc.org/diversity/175-faces/all-faces/cheryl-alexander>



**Trinity College Nabbingo, Kampala, Uganda****Sunday 23rd February**

We arrived at York Station on time and full of hope and expectation. We were two students Caitlan Elliott and Ellie Morris and two members of staff Michaela Cox our Key Stage 4 Base Manager and myself Rod Sims the Deputy Headteacher.

We were to spend a week in Africa at our partner school Trinity College Nabbingo just outside Kampala in Uganda. I had spent the last days before the trip obsessing over the timings to make sure that nothing was left to chance. Within 10 minutes it became apparent that our train was delayed and we would not be able to make it to Manchester Airport in time. Trip cancelled, plane missed – NO! Headteacher to the rescue as Mr Ellis cancelled shopping with his mum and drove all of us to the Airport. What a guy!!

Manchester to Dubai was livened up by the drunken couple on the back seat shouting, kissing and then getting involved in a near fight with other passengers. My favourite line was when she said 'it's my first time I've been away from home and left Paul on his own with the kids'. Further aggro followed us to the Marhaba lounge where we spent the 8 hour stopover in Dubai, this time there was another dispute that lead to airport security being called. The perils of the international jet set.

Monday 24th February

After being woken by the call to prayer, the flight to Kampala was uneventful, We were greeted at the airport by our host Immaculate Nankya who confused my weary mind by being dressed so smart when I had previously only seen her dressed as 'Coach Immy'. I do not want to miss the overwhelming assault on the senses that landing at Entebbe airport and driving into Kampala was. Although there were so many references that are the same everything was so different. The best way I can describe it is that it felt that everything was turned up, the heat, the volume, the brightness, the noise and the smells. The amount of Boda Boda motorcycle taxis and the sheer volume of traffic were beyond my UK comprehension. The strangest thing was that English football was everywhere on the television, we had travelled thousands of miles but on the television was the highlights of a particularly dull 0 – 0 Leeds Middlesbrough game.

Tuesday 25th

Up for breakfast, no to Goats Liver, yes to fruit juice. Arrived at Trinity College to be met by the Deputy Headteacher Betti who showed us around the school as the Headteacher Cordelia had needed to leave to receive the O level results. Huge day in Uganda for education.

Surprised by the fact that with only 5 minutes warning we were introduced to the whole school via an assembly. Disconcerting that immediately as I opened my mouth to speak I was greeted with giggles. Turns out that a Yorkshire accent was not expected! Caitlan and Ellie caused quite a stir as they had the same outfits on which many of the Trinity College girls thought was our school uniform. We met with members of staff during the morning and it was clear that yet again there were so many similarities but so many differences. Same subjects in general but double our class sizes and a tenth of the resources that we have.

My favourite part of the day was when we met the International Inspiration Club who questioned us for nearly two hours about what the differences were between the two schools and countries. The girls asked some fabulous questions and it opened my eyes to the quality of the Trinity College Students. I embarrassed myself when I answered a question for two minutes about Ugandan Curries talking at length about how the Chicken Tikka Masala was the UK's favourite dish. After a small silence one of the Trinity girls said she asked about the Ugandan Currency. This was not helped when my colleague and Caitlan and Ellie all nodded and said that they thought she had said currency and did not know what I was talking about. The first question we were asked was "why did you not bring any boys" thus proving that 15 year old girls are the same the world over. The mood changed when we were asked about Uganda's anti homosexuality laws and this was definitely the issue where we have our biggest differences!

The Trinity College girls could not understand why our girls did not want to go to University or why they did not go to church, Letitia marched Caitlan into the church in order to pray. When on their own the girls conversations were all about going out and hair and beauty.

**Trinity College Nabbingo, Kampala, Uganda**

The day finished with a girls football match, two really good players on the field but the fans were amazing, total difference between the studied indifference of fellow pupils in the UK and the exuberance of the support at Trinity College.

Wednesday 26th

Saw a PE lesson first thing this morning and joined in. Really wish that we had arrived better prepared as we can really help in this area with resources and techniques. The class sizes are so big that for Immy her job is almost impossible. Yet again, knocked out by the exuberance and enthusiasm shown by the girls in 30 degree heat!

Another of the big differences between our school and Trinity College is the aspiration and ambition shown by the Trinity College Students. In the morning we conducted in depth interviews with the international Inspirations girls and they were some of the most impressive young women that I have had the honour of talking to. Their aspirations are not just to earn money but to make a difference to others lives. Amito told us of the troubled times that she had witnessed in Northern Uganda and the atrocities that she had witnessed and how as a result she wanted to be a doctor. Others spoke of how they had seen injustice where the rich were treated better by the law than the poor and how they wanted to change that imbalance. I was staggered by the difference in social responsibility between the Ugandans and the students at my own school.

During the day I was privileged to see a Maths lesson, up until then I was still not sure what the out comes were of the Ugandan education system. The Senior 4 lesson (Year 11) delivered to 57 students on a black board had a subject content that was the equivalent of degree level in our country.

It was with tears in our eyes that we said goodbye to Trinity College at the end of the day.

Thursday 27th

Sightseeing today and a trip to the Wildlife centre to see 'Afro birds' and animals as Caitlan referred to them!

Lunch was on the shores of Lake Victoria and I felt privileged to be relaxing with our hosts Immy, Emille, Edith and Michael as we watched the local fishermen catch fish in the traditional way.

The afternoon consisted of bartering for our souvenirs at Buganda Rd Craft Market where Ellie proved she could hold her own with the local stall managers to secure a good bargain!

We were honoured in the evening by a dinner with the Headteacher and the Board of Governors.

Friday and Saturday

The journey back was uneventful apart from Miss Cox being disappointed by the planes that we flew in. I never thought that I would be happy to see English Roads and a sense of order.

Final Thoughts

When we were there the Ugandan national newspapers carried on their front pages for two consecutive days the results of the O levels (GCSE's). Our local papers do not think that this is front page news! I spend a significant part of my day persuading students that education is important and persuading some parents that education is important, WHY?

I feel that we learned more from the Ugandans than they learned from us and I hope that all of our party feel that this trip has changed our lives.

Final Thanks to all our hosts at Trinity College Nabbingo (especially Immaculate) for making us most welcome.



Term Dates

Summer Term

Tuesday 22nd April - Start of New Term

Monday 5th May - **Bank Holiday**

Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May - Half Term Holidays

Friday 27th June - **Training Day**

Friday 18th July - Last Day of Summer Term

Monday 21st July - Training Day

Tuesday 22nd July - Training Day

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