

# NEWSLETTER

Tadcaster Grammar School

Be Your Best Self



Easter 2020



## Too soon to say GOODBYE

No exams, no proms, no end-of-year celebrations, school trips, sports days, shows, or discos. No farewells to friends and teachers. No nights out to celebrate the end of exams.

*"It doesn't feel real, it feels like we're in a movie and something has gone wrong."*



Year 11 Students

The date was Wednesday March 18 when the news hit around teatime. As expected, schools were to be closed – but what came completely out of the blue was that Year 11 students would not be going back and their GCSE exams had been scrapped too. The same scenario befell A level students. Everyone was devastated when they learnt that they wouldn't be going back to school and the exams were cancelled. With emotions swirling around in their heads at the realisation they would be saying goodbye to school, and people they have spent the last five years with as early as March 20, with a little more than 48 hours notice, as well as the exams they had been studying so hard for being swiped from under their feet.

Everyone in Year 11 had so many plans and events they were going to do after they finished school but suddenly, they were being told they weren't going to be able to complete the year.

So with very little notice that Friday 20th March was going to be the last day of school for some Year 11s. Staff managed to pull together a fantastic day to remember for them. The day started with a Leavers' Assembly which looked back over their years at Tadcaster Grammar School,

complete with some cringe worthy pictures of their former years from Year 7 onwards. Students then enjoyed a carousel of activities including a dance challenge, a quiz and a game of rounders. The day ended with a party, hot food, music, shirt signing and some very emotional goodbyes. Well done Year 11, you have made us so proud and we wish you all the best for the years to come. We also look forward to seeing many of you return to Tadcaster Grammar School Sixth Form in the new academic year.

*"We will get through it. This generation will be the strongest this country has ever seen."*

For many of the Year 13 students it was just too soon to say goodbye for them, it was extremely upsetting, as most had studied at Tadcaster for seven years and this was their last day in school, and for some it might be the last time they would see their friends, as they move away to begin the next chapter in their lives.

Like Year 11, we were not expecting to have to say goodbye to Year 13 quite so quickly and no one was prepared for it. One student said *"It is just crazy to think that two whole years of work is just gone in March 2020. We have got nothing to show for it"*



A very emotional Year 13 Leavers' Assembly

But after the initial shock, true to form, the year group did what they do best; they rallied together to say their goodbyes to friends and staff. S1 was turned into an all day party! A very emotional leavers' assembly, was lead by Mrs Knapton and Form Tutors. Stories were relayed, along with secrets discovered; there was much laughter and a few tears.



It was then onto a rounders match, followed by sausage sandwiches and pizza to finish the day off, before heading off their separate ways.



Good Luck and Best Wishes to all Year 11 and Year 12 students and remember always **BE THE BEST** because wherever you are the Good Luck will follow you.

We look forward to welcoming all Year 11 and 13 students back to Awards Evening later in the year for a truly unique celebration.

# RE students visit Rome

By Miss askew



During February half term 2020 students from Years 11 and 12 joined me and Ms Laidlaw on our first overseas RE trip...to Rome! We spent three jam packed days exploring all that Rome has to offer!

On the first evening we snuck up the side of the Trevi Fountain (the best way to do it), stumbling upon the amazing statues. We all made a wish throwing our coins behind us

into the water. The local legend is that if you throw the coin and make a wish then it will come true and you will return to Rome. I have now been three times and thrown a coin each time...

When you are a 5ft 1 ¾ tour guide the bright backpack is a must! Nobody lost me, not even once on this trip! Being the tour guide I am showing students the gladiator arena; where the gladiators were housed alongside the other contestants and animals they would fight. We made our way up to the viewing gallery where the Emperor and noblemen would be seated. The students kept up well with my fast walking pace; one day we completed just over 27,000 steps! The students were a wonderful group, and a credit to school.



alongside the other contestants and animals they would fight. We made our way up to the viewing gallery where the Emperor and noblemen would be seated. The students kept up well with my fast walking pace; one day we completed just over 27,000 steps! The students were a wonderful group, and a credit to school.



**What the students thought** *-It's really difficult to choose a favourite memory because I enjoyed the entire thing (plus I'm bad at decisions). I had an amazing time and everything we went to see wowed me as to how intricate and beautiful it all was! Another important factor of the trip was the people I stayed with, who were all wonderful, those I already knew and those I only just met, they all enhanced the trip individually and it was great talking to them. The ice cream was to die for, scoops were large but I certainly can't complain! I hope the Trevi fountain is right and it'll take me back to Rome again soon! I had a fab time and I really appreciate the entire organisation put into this trip. **Charlotte***

*My favourite part of the trip was definitely exploring the Vatican and getting some wonderful pictures. I got to see all the amazing hand painted artwork and sculptures which had taken years to paint and build. I'm amazed that we managed to cram so much into the time that we had but it was all so worthwhile and such a truly great experience that I will never forget. We were so lucky to get such glorious weather as well. I had a marvellous time in Rome and I would 100% love to go back. **-Laura***

*I personally think the Coliseum was the best part of this trip. This is because I really didn't expect it to be as big as it was (this was such a shock.) The weather also helped make everything look spectacular as the sun was shining. Overall this trip was an amazing experience and I would definitely recommend it. I have made some great memories and I made some new friends. **-Grace***

*When we entered St. Peter's Basilica I felt a sense of wonder and couldn't imagine the might it took to build it. During the time the group spent there, a group of pilgrims had also arrived. When they began to sing in Latin it projected far around the architectural marvel. Though not Christian myself, I will forever vividly remember my hairs standing on end as I listened to all those people in one place sharing the same belief through prayer and song. On top of all this the statues and mosaics were just incredible, especially the gold surrounding the stained glass window by the throne. The place will stay as a fond memory in my mind for a while. **-Oliver***

*My favourite part was the gelato. I had 5 scoops and 2 tubs that day because it was so good. My favourite flavour was definitely the lemon as it was really refreshing. **- Charlie***

The Mouth Of Truth! Miss Laidlaw and I daring each other to put our hands in its mouth. There are different legends attached to this statue. One being the idea that your hand would be bitten off if you were a liar...we all came back with all of our limbs. Other legends include being a Pagan statue connected to water and the Gods. Another, more practical legend- a fancy manhole cover so water and sewage could flow through the mouth. Finally there was the idea that animals were slaughtered over the mouth for the Gods. You pick which one you believe!



## Tales from Auschwitz:

### A Survivors Story

In February all Year 9 students were once again fortunate enough to be visited by Holocaust survivor Dr Iby Knill. Dr Knill recalls her time in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in Nazi-occupied southern Poland. She and four friends were taken there in June 1944. Iby believes their companionship helped her survive. Iby was born in what is now the Czech Republic in 1923, but has spent much of her life living in Leeds.

This is the second year that Dr Knill has visited Tadcaster Grammar School as part of our students' study of the Holocaust which has been designed to look at the human cost of this event. Students were able to listen to Dr Knill's testimony and then ask questions (mostly prepared given the whole year group being in attendance).

This is an event that is becoming increasingly unique given the age of survivors like Dr Knill who is currently 96! We hope that Year 9 were able to gain a valuable insight into what it was like to really experience the Holocaust. If you want to know more about her story it can be found at her website [>>read more](#) or in her various Ted Talks on youtube.



We have just finished a very successful term of reading mentoring. A cohort of 14 year 7 and year 8 students took part, partnered with 14 Year 12 students. Improvements in ability and confidence were shown across the cohort.

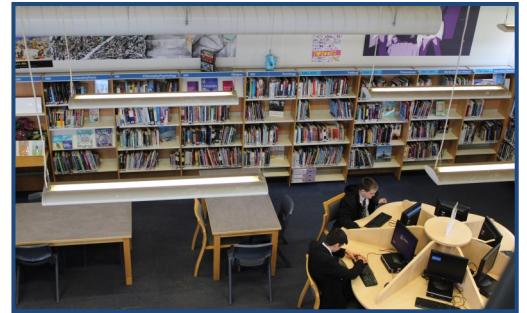
The Year 12s have completed their Accreditation in mentoring skills. They showed excellent diligence and maturity towards their partners and we are very proud of their efforts.

The celebration assembly couldn't take place due to school closure. However, all participants will receive a certificate once we return to school.

# World Book Day

And the ILC celebrates 15th Birthday!

March 5th saw the ILC host a double celebration, not only was it World Book Day, but it was also the Independent Learning Centre Building's official 15th Birthday. The ILC was built in 2004/5 to house the school library and a sixth form quiet study area. Officially opened on World



Book Day in March 2005 by Gervaise Phinn, it holds over 12,000 resources (books, audio CDs, DVDs, periodicals etc) These aid students in their studies, and also to encourage their love of reading. On average around 4000 resources are borrowed by staff and students in any one academic year.

The celebrations took the form of a pop-up cafe in the ILC during morning break and, following on from the success of last year, there was a rolling-story for Key Stage 3 students. The rolling-story this year was Malorie Blackman's 'Don't Be Afraid'. Each period throughout the day, saw the teacher read an extract from the book ending on a cliff-hanger, ensuring that both the students and the teaching staff were eager to read/ listen to the next instalment as the day progressed.

In the ILC the tables were set out in cafe style and, for an entrance fee of £1, the students enjoyed a drink, a cake and they could also make a bookmark from a choice of a wizard, a rabbit, a cat, a monster or 'dots'. The atmosphere was wonderful as the students sat amongst the shelves, made the book-marks, enjoyed their beverages, and discussed their favourite books.



A total of £120 was raised as a result of our celebrations and this was donated to Book Aid International. We are very fortunate to have access to such a large number of books and learning resources therefore we used the day to remember that others are not in such a fortunate position. Book Aid International provides new books to people around the world who need them most, and they have sent us this word of thanks; *'from under-resourced schools, to refugee camps, to community libraries - each book sent with the money you raise has the power to change lives... Thank you for celebrating World Book Day in aid of Book Aid International and helping to send books to children around the world'*.

## The Big School Clean

Once again we took part in the 'Great Big School Clean'. It was part of Keep Britain Tidy's annual Great British Spring Clean – the largest mass litter pick in the country. Unfortunately this year only two houses got to take part before it had to be postponed. We asked our students in each form to separate the items they collected into three bags so that as much as possible can be recycled. This has now been rescheduled for September and will be running alongside the Great British September Clean.



## Band Night Success

At the end of February Tadcaster Grammar School's Jam Club hosted its first ever band night at the Barn in Tadcaster. Over 30 budding rock stars took part, playing a range of music from Radiohead, Bob Dylan to Billie Eilish and much more. The barn was packed to the rafters with family and friends supporting our young performers. Some of whom had only started playing their instrument when they joined the school in September. The standard of music was exceptionally high and we can't wait to do it all again next year.

*Quote: The band night was an amazing event for students and parents alike. The setting of The Barn in Tadcaster was perfect and gave the talented performers the feeling of playing a real gig. The atmosphere was wonderful with musicians of all ages and different levels of experience performing to a crowd of enthusiastic friends, family and TGS staff. Thank you for the amazing efforts and dedication of the Music Department in facilitating such a great event for these young musicians and rock stars of the future. it really was a brilliant night!*



## THANK YOU!



Sport is powerful as it can bring us together, get us moving. Sport Relief was created to harness that power, the passion, and raise money to help people who need it the most; no matter where they are in the UK and around the world. Throughout Sport Relief week 2020 the students took part in various activities during VT; ranging from a Joe Wicks HiiT session to just dance. The students also had the opportunity to compete in various sporting challenges during lunchtimes. These sporting challenges varied from a 'crossbar challenge' to a 'sponsored cross country'.



Students enjoying a Just Dance session

## Year 8 Ski Italy

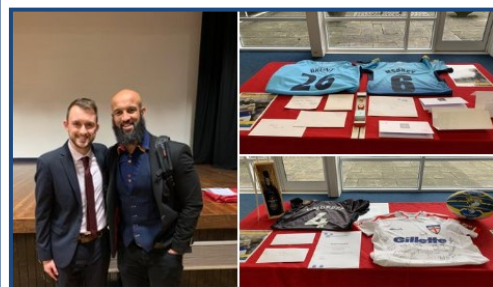


The ski visit was absolutely amazing. I got the chance to try out loads of new experiences. It was such an amazing week as it was just some chill -out time with your friends surrounded by beautiful scenery everywhere you looked. The journey down wasn't so great (because of Storm Denis) but it was well worth it for the

week I had. The skiing was great, our instructors were super nice and we skied the entire mountain in just one week – I learnt so much from them. Our rep, Sarah, was such a lovely person and queries or questions you had, you could ask her and she would sort it out immediately. I progressed so much that week, not just in my skiing, but also in my people skills. I felt I socialised much more with my friends than what I would at home and my Italian has come on so much. Everyone was so friendly and I will always remember that this trip could not happen without the fabulous members of staff that help plan it and come on it; so, a big thank you to Mr Solk, Miss Holmes, Mrs Solk, Mr Power and Miss White. For any Year 7s who are unsure whether to go on this visit or not, I would strongly recommend it – you will progress such a long way, and to be perfectly honest, it's just a week with your friends away from your parents!

By Charlie Year 8

Our main event was our 'Evening with Jamie Jones-Buchanan'. JJB came in to discuss stories from his illustrious career and also offered inspiration and advice to the students in attendance. During the evening we also held a raffle and auction; auction prizes included: A Norwich City shirt signed by Ben Godfrey and a signed England Rugby League shirt.



Mr Middleton welcomes Jamie Jones-Buchanan

When you donate to Sport Relief, you're supporting people living incredibly tough lives in the UK and around the world, whether it's mental health, homelessness, domestic abuse or children struggling to survive.

We are incredibly proud to announce that Tadcaster Grammar School raised a fantastic **£1893.10**. Thank you to all students, parents and staff who helped us reach this amazing amount.

# Rugby Report

Review of the season 2019-2020

by Mr Betts

As we look back at the rugby season in the school this past year, although it has finished dramatically, we can take real heart from the increase in participation and number of matches we have played throughout this season.

**Year 7** In their first year, the Y7's have shown some real character and potential. They play with a sense of fun and skill that epitomises the attitude in the school. They have had some good results and with increased participation and training next year, they will be a good team to watch.

**Year 8** This year the Y8's again have built on the previous solid season. They have shown great

strength in the backs and probably have the most potent attack in the school. If the forwards can match the level of skill and effort from the backs, then their first year in the Yorkshire Cup next year could be very promising.

**Year 9** The year group that are emerging as seriously determined and motivated to do well. The numbers playing and in training have increased significantly and this has led to very good performances against both Harrogate and Yorks schools. Again, if this continues into Y10, there is a real possibility of a good Yorkshire Cup. The Y9's have been a pleasure to coach and should be very proud of their efforts.

**Year 10** They are undoubtedly one of the most talented sporting groups in the school and the way their rugby has taken off this year is credit to themselves and the dedication and enthusiasm of Mr Holmes. They have played more



competitive matches than any other team and tested themselves against

some of the best in Yorkshire. But their outstanding quality is their inclusiveness and determination to never give up. Y11 is always a short year, but it would be great to have a really solid set of games up to Christmas.

**Girls Rugby** Thanks to North Yorkshire RFU, we were able to start girls rugby in school. Everyone had fun and next year we will look towards some fixtures. Finally, a very heartfelt thanks to the PE department of Mr Solk, Mr Middleton and Mr Holmes for all their support and efforts this year to continue to build rugby in the



school. In addition it would be remiss not to mention Mr Watkinson (RAW Family Design) and Mr Carr (Parent), for their support with

training and fixtures. It is a privilege to work with all these people, as it is with the students, and I am very grateful that



they have helped build the rugby in the school to higher levels of participation and engagement.

## Careers Update

Our annual Careers Fair returned on Tuesday 10 March 2020, with over 40 exhibitors in attendance representing employers, volunteering groups, along with Further and Higher education providers. It was great to welcome back two former students who returned to represent the companies they now work for; Matthew from JBA Consulting and Dan from Askham Bryan College. Students and parents had the opportunity to engage in conversations about future careers and also attend a range of seminars during the event. A big thank you to all who supported this event.

If you are interested in exhibiting at next years Career Fair, please email [careers@tgs.starmat.uk](mailto:careers@tgs.starmat.uk).



Edward & Matthew from JBA Consulting

## Guest Speaker

We regularly have guest speakers in school sharing their career and industry knowledge with students. In March we welcomed Sarah Rhodes from Leeds City Council who shared with Sixth Form students her knowledge and expertise of the apprenticeship application process.

If you are interested or know of a friend or colleague who would like to support students sharing career and industry knowledge, please email [h.lawson@tgs.starmat.uk](mailto:h.lawson@tgs.starmat.uk).

## Where are they now?

Calling all former students! Current students really benefit from hearing about what former students have been doing since leaving Tadcaster Grammar School. Next term will be launching "TGS Alumni - Where are they now?" If you are a former student and you would like to share what you have been doing since leaving school please see our website and twitter for further updates.

## Career online guidance and publication links;

### Post 16 school leaver information

<https://www.allaboutschoollleavers.co.uk/>  
**TARGET careers** - Information and guidance for school leavers: Apprenticeships, Careers, University <https://targetcareers.co.uk/>  
**Sixth form**-For students wanting to remain in Post 16 education at TGS Contact [r.knapton@tgs.starmat.uk](mailto:r.knapton@tgs.starmat.uk).

### Apprenticeships

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>  
<https://careermag.co.uk/apprenticeship-cover-letter/>

### For school leaver advice and future career planning for students remaining in education

Careermag <https://careermag.co.uk/subscribe-to-careermag/>

## Environment Competition

During February the Languages department invited all Year 9 Students to enter a competition, the theme was "Protéger l'environnement". They had to produce a creative entry on the theme that included at least 20 French words. Allannah and James, our Sixth Form Language Ambassadors, spent a lot of time judging the fantastic entries and decided to award the following prizes: Best poster: **1st** Ellie, **2nd** Beth, **3rd** Ina, Finley and Matthew. (special mention to Anabel, Madi, Sophie, Lily, and Scarlett ). Best digital entry :



**1st** Freddie, **2nd** Kirsty , Hattie, and Zac. **3rd** Alexandra, Polly and Sam.

The quality of the entries was exceptional.

## Food Banks

**Wetherby & District** Distributing food from 10am Tuesdays and Fridays. We will endeavour to continue to support those people who would normally come to us if they find themselves in food poverty. Our Distribution Centre at Boston Spa is closed at present.

**Selby & District** Distributing food from the 1811 Centre at the bottom of New Lane, opposite the Posterngate surgery, from 10.00am Mondays and Fridays, and 30 New Lane is open only for donations at the same times.

Also support can be given by your local **Salvation Army Tadcaster. Open daily 9am-11am** Phone: 01937 831091

If you are needing to access your local food bank please contact school [here](#) where you will then be issued with a voucher code.



# ARE YOU ENTITLED?

If parents/carers living in North Yorkshire are on a low income they may qualify for Free School Meals (to apply for Free School Meals you can complete the form at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/free-school-meals> In addition to securing free school meals, this would also result in the school receiving Pupil Premium funding from central government which we can then utilise to support your child with additional educational opportunities. Go to this website for more details: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

As a school we want to open up all opportunities to all students and do not want financial difficulties to be a barrier to these opportunities for pupils. We would always welcome dialogue with parents/carers to discuss how we can offer support in these circumstances. Please feel free to contact our Pupil Premium lead in school Mrs Hubbard (v.hubbard@tgs.starmat.uk) or your child's tutor or House Leader to discuss these matters further.

## A Note from the Head

It feels rather strange to be sitting in my office in an almost deserted school during the current national lockdown. I think the events of the last couple of weeks arrived so quickly that it has taken us all a while to adjust to a new equilibrium. We thought it was important to issue this newsletter to highlight the fantastic work this half term and, as usual, this is just a snapshot.

School has been partially open recently to provide care for a small number of students and I firstly want to acknowledge and thank all the staff who continue to be involved with this. In addition, even though not physically in the building, staff continue to work supporting our excellent 'virtual curriculum' which students are engaging with at home. Our current situation has also presented some interesting leadership and management challenges such as recruiting staff by live on-line conference and formulating the timetable for next academic year.

As usual, I could quote dozens of examples of students and staff going over and above in the last few days and weeks, but I saw the impact of this so vividly written on the faces of the year 11 & 13 students leaving school on their last day. I particularly wanted to highlight the efforts of all of the staff involved in making these 'leavers' days' work at such short notice. That is what the school does best - Students Considered First.

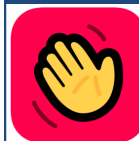
As the weeks progress, we will undoubtedly continue to face challenges, but I know that we will turn these into opportunities. I also know that your school staff will bring their great enthusiasm and their great devotion towards giving all our students the very best in these challenging times.

I hope you have found optimism and a resilience during the national lockdown and that you and your loved ones are faring well.

My regards,

Andrew Parkinson  
Headteacher

## ONLINE SAFETY



Are your children tempted to 'Houseparty'? Please read the safety guidelines and take care to monitor all social media. Houseparty downloads have increased by 122% in the last month. Its popularity has surged during the COVID-19 pandemic. The group video messaging app Houseparty launched in 2016. It allows users to live-chat with up to 8 people where they can play games and chat with friends and family in a 'room' (group video chat). It's currently available on Android and iOS phones, macOS and Chrome. Apple rate Houseparty as 12+ and Google Play urge 'parental guidance', but Common Sense Media and others recommend users be at least 15 to use the platform. [>>read more](#)

# Easter House Competition

Competition  
Time!



To tackle the Coronavirus blues, we want to hear you belt out the song **"All You Need is Love"** by The Beatles! The aim is to mix all your tracks together to create a whole-school recording which will help us to 'spread the love' during this challenging time.

The resources you will need can be found in an email sent to students from Miss Bignell.

There are prizes upon our return to school for the House/s with:

- ◆ The most people singing in total
- ◆ The most entries submitted

There will also be Individual prizes for the best photos of those completing the challenge.

**The Rules:** \* Recordings should be audio only (no videos!)

\* You need to sing along to the backing track.

\* The backing track should be played through head/earphones so it can't be heard on the recording, or be played very quietly in the background.

\* Multiple people can sing on one recording - get your families involved!

Dawson, Wharfe and Toulston - please learn part 1

Calcaria, Ogleshorpe and Fairfax - please learn part 2

**Submission details:** Please email your entries (recording and ideally a photo) to Miss Bignell. In the email please tell us the number of people singing on the recording plus your name, your tutor group and your House. One submission per student only!

**Deadline for entries: Monday 20th April**

May the best House win!  
Miss Bignell and Miss Buckley

who wants  
to win...

**STAY HOME**



**PROTECT  
THE NHS**



**SAVE LIVES**

To all of our families working in Health and Social Care

The staff at TGS would like to say a massive

**THANK YOU**

for all you are doing to keep us safe and well in these difficult times



**NHS**

We hope that you are well and able to keep yourselves safe

**You are in our thoughts**

Your Tadcaster Grammar School family send you our thanks