



NORTON COLLEGE

Beyond Expectations

Our Ref: TJ/HTO

15 July 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

We have almost made it to the end of the year. As a reminder, Thursday 21st July is the last day in school for students, as we chose Friday 22nd July as the Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday in lieu.

It is easy to forget that this has been an exceptionally turbulent year as a result of Covid. We have twice had to set up Covid testing centres in school, staff absence levels were so high during one week in March that we were forced to switch to remote education for a single year group and student absence due to Covid infection has, at times, been as high as 5% of the cohort. However, this week has marked a further return to post-pandemic normality. Yesterday, we ran our first Sports Day and Year 13 Leavers' Event since 2019 and, this evening, we have the Year 11 Prom. We very much hope that this signals a further return to the normal rhythm of school life in 2022-23.

The majority of students have readjusted to school life remarkably well. There are, inevitably, a small number of students for whom this has been more difficult, for whom we have established several support mechanisms to help. These include, our school counsellor, Mrs Chapman, the introduction of 'Thrive', which is led by Mrs Olley, the school farm and a wide range of academic tutoring programmes. All of these will be expanded further next year.

Heatwave Arrangements

As you will be aware, the weather forecast for the beginning of next week is exceptionally hot. We are following advice issued by the government in relation to this. Students have already been given permission to remove their ties and blazers in school. Additionally, PE lessons will be adapted to avoid vigorous exercise during the heatwave, and we will aim to conduct these lessons out of direct sunlight. We have several fans which are operational across the school site. Please would you ensure that your child brings water and sun cream to school on these days; we do, however, have a limited supply of both.

There will be gazebos on the field to offer shade to students who opt to be outside. Additionally, we will be speaking to the bus companies to ensure that school transport is as well ventilated as possible.

School Day 2022-23

Although the length of the school day will be unchanged next year, there are some changes that we have made to lesson timings. A copy of the school day for 2022-23 is attached separately for information. We will explain the logistics of this to students in more detail in September.

Duke of Edinburgh Expedition

Last weekend, 36 students successfully completed the Duke of Edinburgh expedition, 27 at bronze level and 9 at silver level.

This would be quite an achievement under any circumstances, but it is all the more praiseworthy, given the very hot temperatures. Our thanks go to Mrs Atkinson Spragg, Mrs Douglas, Mrs Machen, Dr Jackson and Mr Kneeshaw, without whom it would not have been possible.



Year 10 Geography Fieldwork

On Tuesday, 60 Year 10 students completed the fieldwork aspect of their Geography GCSE within the local area. They conducted various surveys, including a review of the river depth at different points of the Derwent. This was the first such visit since the beginning of the pandemic and it was extremely successful. We would like to recognise the exemplary way in which students conducted themselves throughout.



End of Term and Year 10 Work Experience

I explained in a letter earlier in the year that, as the additional Bank Holiday on Friday 3rd June 2022 to mark the Queen's platinum jubilee, schools have been asked to identify an alternative date upon which to take this additional Bank Holiday. As a reminder, we have taken this additional day on Friday 22nd July 2022 which means that Thursday 21st July 2022 is the final day of the school year.

This means that Year 10 work experience will run from Monday 18th July to Thursday 21st July. Some students have asked whether they can continue their work experience voluntarily until Friday 22nd July. Unfortunately, as school staff will not be available to pick up any potential issues or concerns, this will not be possible. A separate letter has been sent to parents of all Year 10 students at the beginning of next week containing further detail about the work experience process.

Breakfast Provision in the Canteen

We recognise that many students travel a significant distance to get to school and, consequently, they can struggle to eat breakfast at home on occasion. We are continuing to trial breakfast provision in the canteen. Students are able to purchase food and drink from 08:20-08:40.

We would appreciate it if you could reinforce with your children the need to balance their spending over the course of the day, so that they don't find themselves unable to purchase food at lunchtime.

'Be Informed'

Our local police liaison officers have requested that we share with you a new North Yorkshire Police text service in Ryedale, aimed at parents and carers of teenage children. 'Be Informed' is designed to inform parents and carers, via text message, of any anti-social behaviour incidents in the local neighbourhood that officers are attending.

If their children are out at the time, parents and carers can then use this text as a trigger to contact their children, check their whereabouts, make sure they are ok and reassure themselves that they are not involved in the incident. More detail can be found [here](#).

Picnic Tables for the School Yard and Field

Finally, we would like to thank the two anonymous donors who have each purchased a picnic table for the school, in response to our requests in previous letters. This is an extremely generous gesture, and we are enormously appreciative.

Have a good weekend,

Yours faithfully



Mr T Johnson

Headteacher