



Re-founded 1555

Ripon Grammar School

Helping shape the future since 1555



20th October 2017

AUTUMN HALF-TERM NEWSLETTER 2017

Dear Parents

As we race towards half-term, **Charity Week** is in full swing. The activities arranged have thus far been both varied and enjoyable for students and I do hope that lots of money has been raised for the chosen charity 'Candlelighters' who raise money for children affected by cancer. On Monday in assembly I reminded the students that the original meaning of charity, of course, comes from the Latin 'carus' - beloved or precious, and in biblical terms was translated as 'love'. I hoped that students would remember that, at heart, charity is an expression of concern and care for others and that small sacrifices for us can have huge potential consequences for those far less fortunate than ourselves. Finally, like love, charity should be an on-going commitment and not restricted to one week.

In addition to Charity Week this half term has been very busy. There have been two successful art trips to London and Liverpool, while the French exchange is currently running. A Fourth Form rugby tour to Paris is about to depart too. The second half of term looks to be equally as busy as we look forward to Speech Day on the 10th November, House Drama on the 17th November, a History trip to Berlin, and the Christmas Concert and Carol Service in the cathedral at the end of term. In addition auditions have already started for the Spring term's musical extravaganza 'Billy Elliot' which I am sure will be a real highpoint of the year. Big Band will also be playing at the Ripon Fireworks on Friday 3rd November and the Chamber Choir will sing Choral Evensong at Ripon Cathedral on Monday 6th November. I do hope that you can join us at some of these events.

Our guest speaker this year at **Speech Day** is Reverend Professor David Wilkinson who is the Principal of St John's College and Professor in the Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University. Further details about Speech Day will be sent out separately.

I am delighted that our new **staff** have made such a positive start to the term. Leaving us this week is Mrs McNeill who has been a great asset in the music department and we welcome back Mrs Morpeth after half term. Mrs McNaughten, teacher of Mathematics, will be on maternity leave after half-term and she will be replaced by Miss Jodie Barker. New staff joining us on a permanent basis are

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Mrs Hong, as matron in boarding, and Mr Holt as DT technician.

Following the recent election of a **Parent Governor**, we are pleased to welcome Mr David Ball to the board. Mr Ball has two children at Ripon Grammar School.

The current Upper Sixth are in the midst of **UCAS** season. They have had plenty of advice and support about higher education and alternative careers and pathways. The deadline for medicine, veterinary medicine and Oxford and Cambridge application is close at hand so I wish all students the best of luck. I know that after half-term there will plenty of opportunities to prepare for what I hope will be a successful round of applications interviews.

Careers Club has proved to be very popular this term, with bumper attendances at the monthly lunchtime meetings. At the first meeting of the year, twenty-seven students went along to hear about careers in TV journalism from Claire Montgomery, one of our parents and a well-known face on ITV News. Claire chatted to students across all age groups about her fascinating work in broadcast journalism, for both television and radio, and brought along some of the sizeable TV cameras and equipment which she uses in reporting. Fifty-one students attended the October meeting to hear from Charlotte Craven, who works with the Bishopton Veterinary Group in Ripon, about careers in both veterinary surgery and nursing. A number of our students leave each year to go on to study for veterinary careers, but this meeting proved particularly popular with younger students, who learned about the varied routes into this field of work.

On the **sporting front** the School has enjoyed a wide degree of success. In boys' rugby the 1st XV are currently through to round 4 of the school's vase competition, after wins over Ashville and Harrogate Grammar and Ampleforth. The U16 rugby team is through to the quarter finals of the Yorkshire Cup. The U15s are also having an excellent season, having beaten Ampleforth and competition heavyweights Barnard Castle in the Schools' Cup. Many of the players head off on tour to Paris in the October half-term and all the players will go into the second half of the winter term looking to maintain their unbeaten record. The U14 and U13 sides have all made positive starts to the season, with some challenging games in the White Rose rugby series and some well contested friendlies. The U12s are also shaping up to be a skilful side, certainly a team with a bright future ahead of them.

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Girls' hockey has also had an impressive start. The 1st XI Hockey team is Area and County champions and will compete in the North East round after half-term. Notable wins over Giggleswick, Queen Margaret's, Hill House and Queen Ethelburga's have meant a very positive start to the season. The U16 hockey team were runners-up in their Area tournament and competed well in the County tournament. The U14 hockey team is Area champions and competed well in the County tournament also but missed out on qualification to the North East round. The team won all their Area tournament matches and won one, drew one and lost one at the County tournament.

In boys' football the 1st XI have had a tough start to the season having been knocked out of the National Cup at the first stage. They will look to improve their fortunes in the County Cup as they move into the next part of the season. The U16s are through to round 2 of both the National and County cup after victory over neighbours Outwood. The U15s are through to round 2 of the National Cup after beating Outwood, but lost to the same opposition in the County Cup. The U14s are through to round 2 of the National after a nail-biting penalty shoot-out victory over Boroughbridge. The U13s are out of the National after a home defeat to Thirsk. The U12s are out of the National Cup after losing 5-3 away at Queen Ethelburga's.

In cross-country, the first round of the Cross-Country Cup took place on a very tough course at Giggleswick. First on course were the inter-girls, looking to defend their position as a 'Top 10' school in England. Thankfully, along with the Junior girls and Junior boys, they all safely qualified for the regional finals which will take place in Middlesbrough on Saturday 11th November. Sadly the inter-boys missed out by one place.

The U14 boys' tennis team qualified to represent the Area in the Regional round of the Division 2 AEGON tournament which was held in September at the John Charles Centre in Leeds. The team enjoyed the day and competed well but finished outside the top three.

In **Music** there has been busier than usual start to the academic year. Two new singing groups have been established in the department; Junior Man Choir and RGS Sing. The end of September saw the school choirs perform in a charity concert at Holy Trinity church. Two weeks later was the Autumn concert. Traditionally the whole First Form perform at this event along with at least one piece from every choir and ensemble. In the final week of the half-term, the Senior Girls' Choir joined forces with the Chapel Choir of Harrogate Ladies' College to sing choral evensong at Ripon Cathedral.

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The fifty-eight strong choir created a beautiful sound and played their part in continuing a 500 year-old tradition.

Thank you also to the generous support of the **Parents' Association and Old Riponians' Society**. The former have generously provided money for the following projects: photograph canvas for a recent History department Holocaust project, a drying rack for the Art department, netball dresses, an author visit, kick boxing kit for boarders, help with the DT department's 3D printer and rugby kit for the U14 tour. In addition, at the most recent Parents' Association AGM support was pledged to replace the main assembly hall's projector and screen which I know will be of great benefit for the School during assembly and public presentations. The Old Riponians have also generously donated money for a new monitor screen in the foyer to enable school messages to be relayed electronically to students through the day.

Finally, may I also use this as an opportunity to thank all those parents who generously contribute to the School's **Activities Fund**. This is most appreciated by staff as without this money many activities, and in particular sporting fixtures, could not go ahead. The fund enables parents to enrich the lives of Ripon Grammar School students by providing those additional resources which makes Ripon Grammar School what it is today. Our aim is to encourage every parent to participate by making a gift that is appropriate to them. Every donation will help us to make a real difference to the education of students at Ripon Grammar School. Should you wish to contribute to the Activities Fund details are available on the School's website or alternatively via the finance office.

With best wishes for an enjoyable half-term break.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan M Webb
Headmaster

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SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2018-2019

Term dates as follows:

Autumn term 2018:	Tuesday, 4 September – Friday, 26 October Monday, 5 November – Thursday, 20 December
Spring term 2019:	Tuesday, 8 January – Friday, 22 February Monday, 4 March – Friday, 12 April
Summer term 2019:	Tuesday, 30 April – Friday 24 May Monday, 3 June – Friday, 19 July

Bank holiday during term time (School closed):

Monday, 6 May

Training days will be held as follows:

Monday, 3 September 2018
Friday, 21 December 2018
Monday, 7 January 2019
Friday, 8 March 2019
Monday, 22 July 2019

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