



6 December 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to our Christmas Concert on 15 December at 7.00pm and as we approach the end of the autumn term, also to update you on general matters and celebrate some of the fantastic work that has taken place since the start of term. We continue to be a very active school that seeks every opportunity to support and engage our students; it is very difficult in a letter to capture all that has taken place this term but our website and Pinch of Salt magazine showcase more of our activities, visits, workshops and events from Personal Development Days, Awards Events, My Story learning competition, visit to the Hepworth Gallery, a residential to Iceland and many individual achievements.

End of Term Arrangements

School closes on Friday 16 December at 13.20. Lunch will be available for students at this time and the MyBus service will run at 13.20.

Spring term - dates for your diary

Tuesday 3 January

Monday 16 January
Monday 16 January
Tuesday 17 January
Tuesday 24 January
Monday 30 January
Wednesday 1 February
14-16 February
20-24 February
Thursday 16 March
Monday 20 March
Monday 3 April
Wednesday 5 April
10-23 April

Start of term - All students to attend school at 08.50

Year 9 Parents' Evening
Sixth Form Mock Examinations Results Day
Year 9 and Year 11 Next Steps Evening (for parents/carers)
Year 12 Parents' Evening
PD Day 2
Year 9 Options Evening
School Production
Half term holiday
BBC News Report Day
Year 7 Parents' Evening
Year 8 Parents' Evening
Spring Concert (7.00pm)
Easter holiday

School Achievement

Following publication of examination results in August, there is a period of time in which all schools request remarks and results are re-calculated ahead of publication by the Department for Education of its annual reports on performance measures titled RAISE for KS4 and Level 3 VA for KS5; these look in particular at the progress students have made within each school against national standards. We attained our best ever examination results at both KS4 and KS5 this summer; even more of an achievement is that the level of progress our students made under the new measure known as Progress 8, shows that we are a school that has achieved above the national average benchmark based on students' starting points at both KS4 and for Level 3 Value Added at KS5 – a superb achievement which I am very proud of thanks to the hard work and commitment of our parents and carers, students and members of staff working together.

School Improvement

In November we had an external review of school improvement which previously was undertaken by Bradford Partnership; the limited company established by Bradford secondary headteachers six years ago. This no longer exists as the school academy conversion process has changed working partnerships across the district and Bradford Local Authority no longer has the capacity for secondary school improvement and has moved to a sector-led model of school improvement. There still exists, partnership work between schools and across the district in many areas but multi-academy trusts are developing their own systems of monitoring school improvement. The review carried out on 23 and 24 November was by Marianne Young, who until April this year was one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, a HMI; it was a rigorous two-day process that focused on key actions from our Ofsted report, February 2016. Although the report is not yet finalised the verbal feedback and draft report shows we are making good progress against actions and there is compelling evidence that the school is facing challenges to take the school forward.

Adverse Weather Procedures

Although we have already issued a letter regarding this, I felt it important to send a reminder. Any decision a school takes to remain open or to close is not always going to be well received. Critical factors include road conditions and the availability of public transport; we remain in direct contact with transport services and are informed when services are cancelled or disrupted.

The responsibility for school closure rests with the Local Authority (LA) for maintained schools such as TSS. However, because of the variation in geography and climate throughout the district, it is normal for the Headteacher to make an individual school closure decision. This decision will be based on a health and safety assessment (both for staff and students); the LA and the Headteacher will keep the school open if at all possible. Only in exceptional circumstances will the school be closed. If weather conditions are such that the school makes a decision to close before the normal school day starts, i.e. around 6.30am, then instruction will be given to publish notification by 7.00am in the following ways which have proven the most effective ones to date:

- A school closure message on Radio Leeds
- An update on our school website - www.titussaltschool.co.uk
- An update via Twitter - @TitusSaltSchool
- An update on the Bradford Schools Online website - <https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/Home.aspx>

If a decision to close is taken during normal school hours, all parents/carers who have provided us with mobile telephone contact details will be informed by text. In the past, we have allowed older students to make their way home immediately but required other students to provide confirmation from parents/carers of transport arrangements; this is usually done by telephone. Some staff will remain in school to supervise students until they are able to get home. We attempt to ensure we can deal effectively with weather conditions and circumstances arising from this that are beyond our control and I trust you feel reassured that we will do all we can. As a final plea, please do not phone reception in such situations as we will need this facility to continue critical school business.

Leave of Absence

In line with DfE guidance, TSS does not authorise holidays during term time. If Leave of Absence is requested for exceptional circumstances, please write to the Attendance Officer giving full reasons for the absence and dates. The school will contact parents/carers directly to arrange a home visit or meeting in school.

Sixth Form Open Evening

Our Sixth Form Open Evening once again proved to be very popular and we had an overwhelmingly positive response from everyone who completed our survey. We appreciate it is very difficult to make choices at this age that will help to shape a future course of study leading to a career; our Open Evening is just one part of a much bigger programme of support and guidance so students know to speak with their Form Tutors, their subject teachers, members of the Sixth Form Leadership Team - Miss Lockerbie, Mr Redhead and Mr Field, to ensure they feel best informed to make those choices and those all-important decisions.

Parking

The roundel car park is extremely busy before and after school, with people parking in the hatched areas and in front of other parked cars; this compromises the safety of our students and hampers the flow of traffic. Therefore, I politely request that drivers display caution at all times and do not stop in areas denoted by yellow hatching. I am also requesting that drivers do not block the bus stop on the main road.

Achievements

The following is an account of some of the events our students have been involved in during the autumn term:

Sporting Success

Fell Running - Dylan Thornton, Year 8, represented school at the English Schools Fell Running Championships in Cumbria, completing the course in 31 minutes and 7 seconds.

Taekwondo - Rebecca Weir, Year 9, took Gold at the Scotland National Championships and Bronze at the Quest Championships. Rebecca is planning a trip around Europe next year to compete further.

Diving - Holly Waxman, Year 9, competed at the Luton Challenge taking 1st in the 1m, 2nd position in the 3m and 5th in the 10m events.

Sailing - Matthew Alred, Year 10, competing in the Topper National Series and the Topper National Championships has been accepted into a national training squad and hopes to compete in the World Championships.

Football - Dominic Southgate, Year 7, has been selected to attend Sheffield Wednesday Football Club's programme for talented players - one day a week for two terms. Budding Bradford City goalkeeper Olivia Townend, Year 8, has been chosen to represent the Under 13's team. Congratulations to the Year 11 football team who came top in the Bradford and Keighley Football League.

Netball - Charlotte Kelly, Year 8 and Alana Banks, Year 7, successfully trialled to join the Bradford and District Under 13 and Under 12 teams respectively.

Trampolining - Harrison Waugh, Year 8, who only took up the sport a year ago, claimed Silver at the Yorkshire Championships.

Swimming - Corey Green, Year 8, competed in Holland for a Bingley Swimming Club team Gold. Corey took part in freestyle, butterfly and breaststroke races. In another competition, Fraser Buxton, Year 8, swam for Bradford Dolphins in five events.

Gymnastics - Sister act, Caitlin Morley, Year 11 and Paige Morley, Year 9, took joint third on the bars and all round at a recent Yorkshire level competition.

Community Spirit

Community Stars Award - Josh Capper, Year 11, has been nominated for an award in recognition of his generous actions during the past year including swimming Lake Windermere to raise funds for the Children's Ward at BRI - despite not being able to swim eight months ago!

Outstanding Learner - Brodie Nash, Year 10, received The Outstanding Alternative Learner Award from One in a Million, a charity that works with children and young people, through sports, the arts and enterprise.

Visits and Visitors

Mexico - Emily Nar, Year 13, has been selected by The Arkwright Scholarships Trust to represent the UK at the 2016 Mexico ExpoCiencias. Emily triumphed over a field of 800, bringing together her love of STEM subjects and the Arts with a design for a robotic piano tutor which will be showcased at the event.

Church Leader - Roger Walton, President of the Methodist Church visited as part of Believe in Shipley, a 10 day festival celebrating the impact of the Christian faith on the local area. Roger, a former Salt Grammar School student himself, spent a busy day with students and staff.

Spanish Students - Olaya, Lucia, Clara and Helena studied at TSS for five weeks to gain first-hand experience of going to school in the UK. The girls were fully immersed in school life and the exchange was a huge success.

Best of the Rest!

Outdoor Gym - We actively encourage outdoor play and physical activity to support student health and wellbeing and so we are very pleased with our new gym equipment. There are two table tennis stations and 15 fitness machines for use during PE lessons and by Year 7 students at break and lunchtimes in the West Courtyard.

Love of Literature - Elinor Gorrell, Year 7, entered The Guardian's Young Critics competition after reading 'The Smell of Other People's Houses' by Bonnie-Sue Hitchcock. Elinor's book review was one of 10 winning entries and she was invited to attend a children's fiction award ceremony and a presentation evening in London.

Duke of Edinburgh Award - More than 20 students in Year 11 have completed their Bronze Award.

Budding Actress - Lucy Blackburn, Year 8, has landed a main part in a film based on a horror movie. Lucy plays a young witch who possesses the main character. Local filmmakers are now seeking funding for full production.

On behalf of all TSS staff, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support throughout what has been another successful term.

I wish you all a peaceful festive time and a very happy New Year.

Yours sincerely



Ian Morrel
Headteacher