

Embed confidence; fuel ambition.

20 October 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

I really cannot believe that we are half a term into the new academic year. As always, it has been a busy time at Lawnswood School.

Collaboration

I am delighted that our new students in Year 7 have settled so well and it was lovely to meet so many Year 7 parents and carers at our Settling In Evening last week. Moving to secondary school is an important step in a child's development and we never underestimate the value of your support in ensuring our students are successful.

In particular, I would like to thank so many of you for making a 'Reading Pledge' to support our whole school focus on reading. Research proves that reading for pleasure improves academic progress and we really appreciate reading you do with your children. Do feel free to send us pictures or share your experiences of reading with your child – we would love to see and hear them.

Sixth Form celebration

I and the sixth form team would also like your help to thank our wonderful Year 12 students. They have really risen to the challenge of their Key Stage 5 qualifications. It is a pleasure to visit their lessons and see the high levels of engagement and independent work they have been doing to prepare themselves.

In order to support the students with these challenges, we began the year with a full Study Skills Programme, where they learnt some of the skills needed by a sixth form learner, including organisation, time management, independent research and essay writing. It is great to see the students now putting these sessions into practice.

We are also extremely proud of the way in which the Year 12 students have approached all the additional activities offered via our Study Programme. To date, every single Year 12 student has been matched with a Key Stage 3 student and spends one registration a week supporting that student to improve his/her reading ability. Twenty two students are now fully trained Progress Coaches and they support students across the school with specific learning challenges; 24 students were successful at interview and gained places on our Extended Project Qualification; 15 are now working with Leeds Beckett University to complete the Progression Module; applications are coming in for the various internship roles that have been offered to them; and 12 students are now working as Sports Coaches helping to facilitate high quality PE opportunities for younger students. It is wonderful to see the older students working so closely with staff and younger students; they are a real credit to the Lawnswood community.

As a school, we are very conscious of the challenges our young people face and the pressure they are under to succeed. It is essential that our students are successful academically and that they take every opportunity to engage in wider school life. However, we know that we also need to

work together to develop a strong sense of resilience and wellbeing. On Wednesday, we took the opportunity to invite Northumbria University into school for the day to work with half of our Year 12 cohort. They ran workshops about stress management as well as helping students to develop aspirations for themselves as they begin to look towards their next steps. The other Year 12 students had a fantastic day out at Leeds University as part of their Higher Education Experience Programme.

Students of the month

Each month, our pastoral teams identify a student from each year group who they feel deserves to be nominated student of the month. Students receive a certificate and a prize and, of course, congratulations from the staff at Lawnswood School. I am delighted to share the Key Stage 4 September students with you.

Ellie in 10AJA - Ellie is an excellent student with an exemplary attendance and punctuality record. She always meets school expectations and has shown a dedicated and mature start to her GCSE studies. Ellie is always polite and helpful and supported the school at our recent Open Evening.

Rupo in 11NRU - Rupo has made an excellent start to Year 11. She approaches all academic tasks with enthusiasm and strives to exceed her targets at every step. Rupo has a kind, caring and friendly nature and is supportive to her peers. Her sense of humour and zest for life is also infectious. Rupo is a valuable member of the school's Student Leadership programme. It's wonderful to be able to recognise our students' qualities and celebrate with them.

Reminders

Sixth Form Open Evening on Wednesday 1 November from 5.00pm until 7.00pm

We look forward to welcoming our Year 11 students and their parents/carers to our Sixth Form Open Evening after half term. As you will understand after reading the celebratory paragraph above, our Sixth Form is impressive. We are very pleased that students who learn with us at Key Stage 5 make excellent progress, achieving outstanding outcomes and are able to progress to a wide range of destinations when they leave us. We believe this is a result of outstanding teaching at Key Stage 5 and the variety and quality of the Study Programme on offer to support students' wider experiences and softer skills.

Please do come along and see for yourself - you will have the opportunity to meet our talented subject leaders and dedicated sixth form team who will be able to give you all the information you need to support your child make the right decision about their options after Year 11.

Friends of Lawnswood Meeting on Wednesday 1 November at 7.00pm

The next meeting of the Friends of Lawnswood will meet in the conference room (meet in main reception) after half term. Please come along and find out how you can further support your child's school.

For more information about Friends of Lawnswood, please visit our website and click on the Friends of Lawnswood tab.

French trip

I would like to wish the students who are taking part in the trip to Paris a bon voyage! I look forward to tracking their progress on the MFL Twitter account and hearing all their stories when they return. We wish them a safe and enjoyable trip. Thank you to the parents who are getting up / staying up at very unsociable hours to take and collect their children!

Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening on Tuesday 7 November

This event offers an opportunity for you to meet your child's subject teachers to find out from them how your child is progressing and how you can support them in their studies at this pressured time in their education. Further details will follow nearer the time.

During the first two weeks after half term, we will undertake our Year 11 Commitment Week (actually a fortnight!). This includes us focusing our quality assurance activities on Year 11 to ensure we are confident we are doing all we can to support their progress and excellent outcomes in GCSE exams next summer.

We realise it is a challenging time for our Year 11 students. We will also be looking to see how they are coping with their workload and how we can support their preparation for the forthcoming mock exams.

Fire safety

As we approach Halloween and Bonfire Night, we ask for your support in ensuring we keep our students safe. Our theme for assemblies in the week after half term is Fire Safety and, during registration sessions, students will also have the opportunity to discuss how to celebrate safely.

We do not allow fireworks in school and will sanction very severely any student who brings them onto the school site. Our students' safety is paramount and we cannot allow this to be compromised in any way.

Thank you for your support.

I hope you and your family have a lovely half term and I look forward to seeing all our students back with us safely and well rested on Monday 30 October.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Bell', written in a cursive style.

Mrs J Bell
Headteacher