

# Newsletter

ISSUE 436

Of great merit, character & value



## Spotlight on: English

**Talk is one of the most powerful tools a learner has and, in English, it sits at the centre of how pupils make meaning. Research consistently shows that structured classroom discussion - where pupils question, justify, build on one another's ideas and articulate their thinking - has a significant impact on progress. When pupils verbalise their interpretations, they don't just share what they think; they refine it, challenge it, and strengthen their understanding through dialogue.**

This is why the English department at Woldgate continues to place such emphasis on talk. Even when reading, pupils use reciprocal reading - a strategy rooted in decades of literacy research - to predict, clarify, question and summarise together. Through reciprocal reading, teachers are helping students internalise the habits of expert readers while also giving them the confidence to speak with purpose.

This term, Year 7 have taken talk even further by incorporating more drama based activities into lessons. Stepping into a character's shoes, experimenting with movement, or staging a moment from a text has opened up new avenues for discussion, allowing pupils to explore ideas physically before articulating them verbally.

This commitment to talk, performance and interpretation has shaped learning well beyond Year 7. Last term, Year 9 had the opportunity to take part in the York Shakespeare Project, an experience that brought Shakespeare's language and themes to life through professional level workshops and performance. It was a truly enriching experience and one that we plan to offer to many more pupils over the next few years.

## The play's the thing...

There are few moments more energising in a school year than watching pupils step confidently into the world of live theatre, and last term, 30 year 9 pupils did exactly that. As part of **The Play's the Thing** - a collaboration between the York Theatre Royal, and the Royal Shakespeare Company - our pupils experienced the opportunity to rehearse and perform Hamlet onstage.



Designed to bring Shakespeare's words off the page and into the rehearsal room, **The Play's the Thing** places young people at the centre of the creative process. Alongside nine other primary and secondary schools in York and North Yorkshire, we were tasked with teaching **Hamlet** as a performance and recreating a section of the play to perform at York Theatre Royal.

Year 9 really rose to the challenge! We replaced our regular lessons with drama-based activities that involved exploring Shakespeare's language through movement, voice and stagecraft. Once the class felt confident with the ideas in the play, we created an ensemble production of Act 3.

The partnership between York Theatre Royal and the Royal Shakespeare Company brought professional expertise directly into the classroom. Two members of the English department received training from the Royal Shakespeare Company and York Theatre Royal's Head of Creative Engagement visited the pupils in rehearsals to share feedback on their performances. It was wonderful to watch pupils work "as real actors do," collaborating, refining, and trusting the ensemble around them. Freddie D, who played Hamlet, said: "It was a great experience! It made me come out of my shell; my confidence has grown so much".





By the end of the project, Year 9 had not only deepened their understanding of Shakespeare but also strengthened the kinds of skills that underpin meaningful learning: teamwork, resilience, imagination, and critical thinking. Our day at York Theatre Royal was a brilliant culmination to the project. The group took part in a technical rehearsal, took part in a voice workshop with a professional actor and worked with other schools to create a full performance.

Everybody involved had a fantastic day and learned a huge amount. Isla G, who played Ophelia, said, "The project has grown my confidence and made me realise that I really like drama!". Alice H, who played Polonius said, "The whole experience has given me a completely different perspective about Shakespeare. I've learned so much!"

We intend to run this project next year with all of Year 9. As we continue to refine the curriculum, we will create further opportunities for pupils.



Projects like **The Play's the Thing** are what bring the English curriculum to life. The literary canon is a central thread within the curriculum: the project functions as a springboard for this, allowing pupils to take risks, to collaborate, and to find their own voices within stories that have been told for centuries.



## Headteacher's Welcome

**As we near the end of this half term and begin to look ahead to the final stretch of the academic year, I hope we are all able to enjoy some more sunshine and lighter evenings. It has been a busy and purposeful period in school, and I would like to say how incredibly proud I am of the way our pupils have conducted themselves during examinations so far - they have been phenomenal!**



As we look ahead to the final half term, one of the highlights I am particularly looking forward to is our annual **Awards Evening**, held at the University of York on **Thursday 2nd July**. This is always a special occasion where we recognise pupils whose actions reflect great merit, character and value, alongside those who have shown exceptional flair and commitment across a range of subjects. It is also an opportunity to showcase the exceptional work of our Music and Performing Arts departments, who are already busy preparing for a wonderful evening of entertainment. If your child has been nominated, you will be notified in the coming weeks.

I am also excited that next half term we will begin to talk more explicitly with our pupils about the culture we are continuing to develop in our classrooms; a culture where a deep commitment to learning is the norm and where pupils are motivated to work hard and succeed. Whilst our teachers and support staff will be engaging in further professional development in these areas, we will also be working closely with pupils to share our ambitions for them and to reinforce the importance of high standards and expectations in their learning. I look forward to sharing snippets of the learning that takes place over the final weeks of this academic year.

I hope you all enjoy a restful half-term and I look forward to welcoming all pupils back, in full, correct uniform on Monday 1st June.

**Mrs Adams**  
**Headteacher**



## Wider Community Transport (BH1 and D1)

Please be aware that applications are now being accepted for Wider Community Transport for 2026/27. Application Forms have been sent to current users via Arbor and should be returned to [office@woldgate.net](mailto:office@woldgate.net) before the end of June.

Please be aware places are limited on this service and are dependent on space and account being up to date.

## Key dates

To find out more about upcoming events and visits, please view the [Woldgate School Calendar](#).

- 25th-29th May: ..... Half Term Holiday
- Thursday 11th June: ..... Year 12 Parents' Evening
- Thursday 25th June: ..... Year 7 Parents' Evening
- Thursday 18th June: ..... Learning Support Review Evening
- Friday 3rd July: ..... Year 11 Prom
- Friday 17th July: ..... School walk and end of term (12.40pm finish)



# Physical Education Extra Curricular Calendar

Lunch (12.45pm – 1.15pm)				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Boys Cricket All years Muga (BSC)	Girls Tennis All years Muga (RPA)	Boys Tennis Y7 & Y8 Muga (JSA)	Boys Tennis Y9, Y10 & Y11 Muga (BER)	Girls Cricket All years Muga (MBI)

After School (3.25pm – 4.25pm)		
Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Girls Rounders All year Field (RPA)	Boys Cricket All years Field (BSC & BER)	Athletics All Years Field (JSA)
GCSE PE Y11 Revision KU4 (MBI)		Duke of Edinburgh KU1 (RPA)
Girls Cricket All years Field (FMD)		

### What do I do if I want to join a LUNCHTIME club?

Just turn up to area where the club is, take off your tie and blazer and off you go.

### What do I do if I want to join an AFTERSCHOOL club?

Make sure you have your PE kit with you and as soon as the bell goes at the end of the day, meet the PE staff at the changing rooms behind T block

### Do I need to SIGN UP or REGISTER for any sports club?

Absolutely not, just turn up and we will make sure we get your name and form down.

### How do I get home from the club?

It is your responsibility to organise a way home with your parent and carers, whether that be agreeing that you can walk home or organising a lift.

**YOU MUST TELL WHOEVER IS AT HOME THAT YOU ARE ATTENDING AN AFTERSCHOOL CLUB**



## SEND & Attendance

### Meet the Attendance Team



**Mrs O'Brien** is based in Pupil Reception. She records absence and maintains the registers. She contacts parents and carers if we don't know why pupils are absent.



**Mr Marks** is also based in Pupil Reception. He rewards pupils each week who have 100% attendance, but also talks about their attendance and punctuality. He monitors pupils who come in late and also helps to support pupils with barriers to attendance. He may visit pupils' homes if they are absent for a number of days.



**Mrs Kay** is another valued member of the team. She supports pupils who need help accessing school regularly through concerns over mental health and anxiety. She is always positive and creative and most of all, a good listener.





**Mrs Geary** is a teacher who also oversees attendance for the school. She looks at everyone's attendance each week and awards a prize to each form with the most improved attendance. The pupils with 100% are entered into a weekly draw and there are various prizes for good and improved attendance throughout the year.

She also has meetings with the Local Authority about pupils who are not coming to school regularly. She works closely with the C&As, HoS and SLT to support pupils who find attending school difficult for whatever reason.

**Ruth Ibbotson** started at the East Riding as an Education Welfare Officer when things were still written on paper. Her role has continued to grow and expand as the years have galloped. She genuinely loves what she does; she believes that attending school is every child's right and is a foundation to fulfilling their potential both academically and holistically, through discovering favourite subjects and teachers, to the friends and memories that are made.

Of course, there are times when attending school becomes difficult for a whole variety of reasons. That's where her work really matters. She had the privilege of meeting and supporting so many wonderful children and their families over the years, each with their own story. Every experience has taught her something new, and she continues to learn; always looking for ways we can work together to move things forward in the best interests of the children.

She is delighted to be supporting Woldgate again as she spent a long time here as EWO in previous years and where she feels we work hard to ensure the children in our care feel happy and secure which is the bedrock of building a school that children want to attend.



# How does your attendance impact your future?



Data released by the UK Department for Education shows that the lower your attendance the less likely you are to achieve in your GCSEs.

**100%**

**82%**

Achieved 5 GCSEs  
Grade 5+

(inc. Maths and English)

**OVER 95%**

**77%**

Achieved 5 GCSEs  
Grade 5+

(inc. Maths and English)

**92%-93%**

**53%**

Achieved 5 GCSEs  
Grade 5+

(inc. Maths and English)

**BELOW 90%**

**43%**

Achieved 5 GCSEs  
Grade 5+

(inc. Maths and English)

Research shows that for every 17 days you miss across your school career, your GCSE results go down by one whole grade!



Achieving 5 or more GCSEs at Grade 5+ has shown to increase your lifetime earnings by **41%**

There are  
**365** DAYS  
in a year

**175**  
are not spent  
in school!

*\*That gives you plenty of time for holidays, TV, shopping and video games.*



**Wonder**  
Learning Partnership  
Learn | Engage | Inspire | Thrive

[www.wlp.education](http://www.wlp.education)

## Our Priorities

**Wonder Culture:** The health and wellbeing of colleagues and pupils

**Life Changing Experiences:** For every child, beyond the formal curriculum

**Exceptional Learning:** A collaboration to raise standards and create opportunities

**New Technology:** New software, hardware, access to AI and the virtual world

**Capital Investment:** Shaping our vision for exceptional learning environments

## Wonder Priority: Wonder Culture

The health and wellbeing of colleagues and pupils



## A Collaborative Culture

As part of a family of schools one of the many benefits is collaboration. Our Trust schools work together for the benefit of pupils, colleagues and the community.

Our collaboration goes beyond the classroom to provide opportunities for colleagues to share knowledge and expertise in leadership, operations, finance and more.

For example, our Big Conversation, a Trust-wide consultation led to three project groups working across some of our priorities. Together, these groups have made a huge impact across our Trust:

- Technology
- Culture, Health and Wellbeing
- Education beyond the Curriculum

We regularly bring together colleagues with the same job role from across our schools to share best practice and collaborate on future work or implementation of new processes. These meetings go a long way in allowing for smooth transitions and supporting colleagues.



**Woldgate**  
School  
Of great merit, character & value

# Meet our Pupil Care Team



**Care & Achievement  
Coordinator: Year 7**

Mrs F McDonough  
year7@woldgate.net



**Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead**

Mrs L Cavanagh  
safeguarding@woldgate.net



**Care & Achievement  
Coordinator: Year 8**

Mrs S Oliver  
year8@woldgate.net



**Attendance Officer**

Mrs R O'Brien  
01759 302395 Option 1  
attendance@woldgate.net



**Care & Achievement  
Coordinator: Year 9**

Mrs S Clark  
year9@woldgate.net



**Attendance and Wellbeing**

Mr J Marks  
01759 302395 Option 1  
attendance@woldgate.net



**Care & Achievement  
Coordinator: Year 10**

Mrs R Marsden  
year10@woldgate.net



**Office Manager**

Mrs A Charlton  
01759 302395  
office@woldgate.net



**Care & Achievement  
Coordinator: Year 11**

Mrs L Cavanagh  
year11@woldgate.net



**Office Assistant**

Mrs V Mills  
01759 302395  
office@woldgate.net



**Care & Achievement  
Coordinator: Sixth Form**

Mrs E Fairhurst  
07790 987137  
sixthform@woldgate.net



**Care & Achievement Coordinator:  
Diabetic Care and First Aid.**

Mrs L Kendra  
lkendra@woldgate.net