At the heart of the community

After a busy academic year for Vale of York Academy last year, this one promises to be even more fruitful when it comes to positive community and partnership news. Hundreds of our students were rewarded with an end of year trip to Flamingo Land, a fantastic way to round off the year. A great day was had by all.

On 6th September, Vale of York hosted the Clifton Ward meeting for the first time. With a bumper attendance from a whole host of different organisations and agencies, it’s clear that the school has a place at the heart of the community.

This week, we welcomed the new Year 6 students to our Pick ‘n’ Mix sessions. Students picked two exciting workshops to take part in – everyone had a fantastic time! You can see some of the photos from the event on our website.

Finally, the Vale of York Society is our friendly parent group. They do a superb job of supporting the academy through fundraising, raising the school’s profile and offering their time and skills wherever they can be used.

We would love to see some new members in the group, so if you are interested in joining, please email the school’s Community Coordinator, Rob Orr at r.orr@valeofyorkacademy.org – he’ll be delighted to get you involved, even if it’s just now and again!

Message from the Principal

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the many new members of the Vale of York community as we commence our first full year as a brand new academy. We have already made a terrific start and this newsletter is crammed full of the exciting events of the last few days. It has been a real pleasure to see the Twitter feed and read the reports of the excellent Year 7 residential trip to Lakeside; a fun-filled, action-packed three days where our new students got to know each other, got to know the staff and built the foundations for firm friendships.

The staff have been working incredibly hard over the summer revitalising the school building and preparing for the new year and I was delighted to welcome many new staff to school on 4 September. Mrs McDonagh and Mrs Ward join the senior leadership as Head of English and Maths respectively. Mr Metcalfe and Mrs Humphreys fill the English team. Mr Vine has joined Science, Mr Elwell, Maths and Miss Slingby has been appointed to Modern Foreign Languages. I also welcome to our team Mrs Day the new attendance officer and Mr Durrant who is on the site team.

We were also very pleased to see so many happy faces on GCSE results day. As a result of steadily improving outcomes, the whole year group were able to leave Vale of York and move on to new courses of their choosing at providers right across the city. We have already begun strategic interventions with members of our new Year 11 to ensure pupils are thinking of the very best, the very highest aspirations possible for summer 2018 and we have been really pleased with the positive attitudes and work ethic of these pupils nearing the end of 12 years of education.

DIARY DATES

- Tuesday 10th October
  Young Minds Mental Health Awareness Day
- Wednesday 18th October
  Autumn Concert
- Tuesday 24th October
  Year 11 Parents’ Evening
- Friday 27th October
  School closes for half term at 3.00pm
- Monday 6th November
  Academy reopens after half term

SPORTS CLUBS

The following clubs are running this term, after school from 3.00-4.00pm unless we have fixtures:

- Years 7 and 8 boys: Football training – Mondays
- Years 7, 8 and 9 boys and girls: Rugby training – Tuesdays
- Years 7, 8 and 9 boys: Cricket training – Tuesdays

For further information please contact Mrs Colville, Subject Leader: PE by email: h.colville@valeofyorkacademy.org

GO PAPERLESS:

Do you want to receive this newsletter by email? Just pop a note in your child’s planner or return the slip about receiving the newsletter electronically.

Contacting school:
The quickest way to contact school is through reception.
Tel: 01904 560000 or Email: reception@valeofyorkacademy.org

Vale of York Academy
Rawcliffe Drive
York YO30 6ZS
Mr Halifax: In the Spotlight.

He’s Vale of York’s Vice Principal and lover of all sports, but what really makes Mr Halifax tick?

Vale Voice puts him on the spot...

Let’s go back to the beginning, Mr Halifax.
Where were you born and where did you start your teaching career?

I was born in London, but was lucky enough to grow up in Cornwall. I did my teacher training in Liverpool and got my first job in Hensel Hepstead in 1994. Then I moved to York in ‘98 and I’ve been teaching in York ever since. For a long time I was at Archbishop Holgate’s and had various roles there – Head of Department, Head of Faculty, Head of KS4, Assistant Head – and I also did a stint as an Advanced Skills Teacher for the Local Authority. Lots of variety!

When did you decide you wanted to be a teacher?

Honestly? I was doing sports coaching post Uni and I thought, ‘I can do this and I quite enjoy it.’

What’s your biggest fear?

That scene in Kill Bill 2 where Uma Thurman is buried alive. That. I’m claustrophobic.

What’s the trait you most deplore in yourself?

I’m a bit too self-critical.

What would your superpower be?

There was a cartoon when I was a kid that would go ‘What do you want to be when you grow up?’ and I would say, ‘I want to be a superhero’. I think what my superpower would be is the strength of a tiger and so on. I could accomplish anything – if they can face their fears of heights or water, then they can face the challenges in the classroom.

Have you got a recommended read for us?
The most recent book to grip me was Tripwire by Lee Childs – the third in the Jack Reacher series. I’m a sucker for a good crime thriller.

What do you count as your biggest success in teaching?

I’ve taken kids to The National Basketball Finals and got the best results in the school with certain cohorts of kids and the bit I get most joy from is bumping into old students who have a bit of a story to tell. I love seeing a student I once taught who tells me, ‘Do you know what? I’m doing well.’ Ultimately, you just want to know that kids that you’ve taught are doing all right.

And finally, how do you relax?

First choice would be to pop on a pair of skis, get knee-deep in powder snow and just go...

MUSIC PLEASE!

We are holding our Autumn Concert at 7.00pm on Wednesday 18th October in the Main Hall. Tickets £2 / Concessions £1.50.

Please do come along!

York Music Service: YMS offers high-quality individual or group tuition on a wide range of instruments. Currently we have students receiving tuition on drums, piano, bass, guitar, voice, saxophone, flute, clarinet and trombone. If you are interested and would like to find out more please visit the York Music Service website at www.yorkmusicservice.co.uk.

Prices depend on length of lesson and group size and financial support can be offered in certain circumstances.

Music Clubs: Singing Club is on Monday 3.00-3.45pm and Band is on Wednesdays 3.00-4.00pm, both in S20. Singing Club is open to all ages and abilities and Band is suitable for any instrument from about Grade 3 standard.

Music Tour: Final call! We are looking onto the possibility of running a Music tour to Holland next May but numbers are a little low at the moment for it to go ahead.

For further details about any of the above, please contact Mrs Brady, Subject Leader: Music, by email: o.brady@valeofyorkacademy.org

ART ATTACK

Ten of our Year 11 leavers have had work selected to be shown in the York-wide exhibition ‘Proper Champion’.

Our students worked incredibly hard this year and we’re delighted that this show will display their efforts! Take a look at the Art curriculum area on the website to see some of the work.

Mr Wilson, Subject Leader: Art