



VYNE NEWSLETTER – Friday 7 December 2018

Headteacher's Update

It has been good to have had the opportunity to reflect on the current educational landscape this week, having attended the SSAT National Conference in Birmingham earlier this week. There were several notable keynote speakers including the current Ofsted Chief HMI, Amanda Spielman, David Lammy MP and the BBC Arts Editor, Will Gompertz. Although this seems to be quite an eclectic mix of speakers they all had a clear agenda in relation to school improvement and advancing the lives of young people. You may have read recently that Ofsted are planning to take a broader focus in their new inspection framework which is currently being piloted in some schools. Spielman has long argued that the narrow focus on outcomes and performance tables during Ofsted inspections have driven some schools to lose sight of their core purpose, which is the day-to-day experience of young people within the school curriculum. In essence outcomes are important, but it is how those outcomes are derived that is of greater importance. With respect to this I do believe that we are well placed and I very much welcome these changes, but like many others await to see how Ofsted teams are able to standardise their judgements when they are less reliant on data and potentially more subjective.

Will Gompertz's keynote speech was well received. If you are not familiar with his name then I suggest that you google him; he is very recognisable, particularly if you keep up to date with the Arts news on the BBC. Will spoke in an entertaining manner about the importance of promoting creativity in our students, asking the question why some people are incredibly creative and can generate incredible ideas that potentially change the way we all think or experience life, such as an Artist such as Paul Cezanne or even a Creative Director at Disney Pixar, whilst for many of us this level of creativity of this nature is not the norm. Gompertz argued, quite convincingly, that there are no new ideas as such. Rather that new ideas come from the disturbance of old ideas and that our education system in many ways does not support creativity or reward it. Shakespeare, he reminded us created 3000 new words when writing his plays but you would not get credit for that in your GCSE Literature exam!

David Lammy participated in a very engaging discussion on the main stage. Ignoring any political affiliations he remains a strong advocate of the state school system and the young people who exist within it. You may be aware that he is a strong critic of the Oxbridge admissions system. He pointed to the fact that two London boroughs, Richmond upon Thames and Kensington send more students to Oxford and Cambridge each year than Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool combined. Of further interest (to me at least) is the fact the American Ivy League Universities such as Harvard and Yale do not expect the same grades from all of their students but instead take account of the context in which they are studying. They simply want the brightest minds, regardless of whether the young person has come from Bel-Air or Harlem.

Attendance at conferences such as these, give a great opportunity to meet, network and exchange and discuss ideas and knowledge with colleagues who work in a different location, but who also face similar challenges. This opportunity to collaborate and discuss strategy and new possible solutions is invaluable.

There are a number of difficult issues that can impact on young people and some of these are far more acute than they were for previous generations. Some of these issues only impact on a relatively small number of students, however we do feel that it is important that all parents remain informed on issues such as the prevent strategy, child sexual exploitation (CSE) and e-safety to name but a few. We regularly update information and guidance on a range of issues on our school website and I would advise all parents and carers to take the time to visit the Parent Zone and scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the 'Keeping Safe' hyperlink. As a reminder, if you do have any concerns regarding your child's safety or well-being then please contact your child's Year Leader or the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Safeguarding, Mrs Foster.

This week we said a very 'fond farewell' to Mr Terry Henderson, our Pastoral Mentor since 2012. Mr Henderson has helped many students, parents and staff over the last six and a half years and he will be greatly missed. He will be returning to a role within the Metropolitan Police Service involved with their Police Promotion Process. All staff, students and Governors of Vyners School wish Mr Henderson every success in his future career and thank him for his considerable contribution to the school.

My thanks, this week go to all parents and carers of students in years 7 and 12 who have attended our Parents' Consultation Evenings over the past fortnight. Although we do expect representation from all families we also appreciate the excellent attendance rates on these evenings. I do hope that those family members that did attend found the evening to be informative and I would remind you that if you have any concerns about your child's progress at any other point in the year that you contact your child's relevant classroom teacher.

The final two weeks of any term are always frantic, but the end of the autumn term is usually busier than most. Our Year 11 students have started their trial exams and we wish them the very best of luck. Having popped into the Art exam last week and seen the quality of work from the cohort it appears that the students have made an excellent start to the process. Meanwhile, our Year 13 students are busy readying themselves for their trial exams that will be taking place in January (or at least they should be). There are a number of events taking place this week that mark the start of the run in to Christmas. On Wednesday we will be entertaining senior members of the community during our Senior Citizens Christmas party. This is always a wonderful event and we are delighted that we are able to continue what has become an important tradition at the school. Our Christmas Carol Concert takes place on Thursday evening at 7.00pm in the school hall, whilst the Christmas Fayre will take place from 3.00pm on Friday afternoon. It would be great to see as many parents and friends of the school at the latter two events as possible.

Finally this week, I would like to thank Mr Cullum, Miss Brown and all of the students who sang Christmas carols at Uxbridge Station on Tuesday evening. They helped to raise £586 for the Click Rukiga programme. They had many positive comments from the public about how well they sang and played. A fantastic effort that was appreciated by so many.

Have a wonderful weekend.
Gary Mullings
Headteacher

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wednesday 12 December	-	4.00 – 6.30pm	-	Senior Citizens Christmas Party
Thursday 13 December	-	7.00pm	-	Christmas Carol Concert
Friday 14 December	-	3.00pm	-	Christmas Fayre
Friday 21 December	-	END OF TERM		

HEADTEACHER COMMENDATIONS

Art

Jayden Desai

German

8F Ella Drinkwater-Lunn
8M Emily O'Donnell, Sienna Patel
8W Phoebe Gardner

Music

11F Abigail Cornwell , Kathryn Dungey
11M Isabel Higgins

Pastoral

8F George Alexander, Phoebe Gardner

Work Related Learning Day

8F – Adam Hameed, Katerina Paige,
Johan Andres Perez Velasquez,
Chloe Rooney, Emma Stentafor

STUDENT ATTENDANCE - Year to date as at 30 Nov 18

BEST TUTORIAL

Year 7 - 7W - 97.96%
Year 8 - 8F - 97.15%
Year 9 - 9H - 97.29%
Year 10 - 10W - 96.72%
Year 11 - 11C - 95.89%
Year 12 - 12M - 96.23%
Year 13 - 13W - 95.42%

BEST YEAR GROUP

Year 7 - 96.44%
Year 8 - 95.86%
Year 9 - 94.87%
Year 10 - 95.54%
Year 11 - 94.68%
Year 12 - 94.88%
Year 13 - 92.81%

