

Head Teacher's Weekly Email - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to write to you one final time before we break up for summer to share with you some of the highlights of what has been an extraordinarily busy half term.

Firstly, fifteen students from across the school have received their certificates for the John Muir Award for 'connecting with nature', a very prestigious accolade in this field and a wonderful and worthy achievement. We have also had all of our year 10 and 12 students out on work placement and the feedback from businesses across the North-East has been extremely complimentary, from patisseries to hospitals and even our own school who were supporting some budding teachers.

Last Wednesday, our very talented musicians and singers put on a showstopping performance at 'The Glasshouse International Centre for Music' in Gateshead along with 12 other primary and secondary schools from across the trust. The North East Learning Trust's 'Night at the Movies' really was a night to remember; a great deal of hard work and effort goes into preparing for such events and we were immensely proud of all the students and staff involved.

Local year 6 students have now completed two very successful transition days with us and appeared to settle into the school almost instantly. We are excited for them to become part of our Teesdale School and Sixth Form family officially in September.

Today we have rewarded our amazing students with an activities day. Some students visited Light Water Valley, Flamingo Land or attended an outdoor wilderness trip. Others stayed in school choosing from activities such as bridge building, film making, string art or competing in a chess competition - everyone had a well deserved great day! Moreover, fifty students and staff returned from an educational 4 day school trip to Belgium. They visited the battlefields of the Somme and Ypres and all returned safely, full of historical knowledge.

Finally, it is with great sadness that I have decided that this term will be my last as headteacher here at Teesdale School. Many of you already know that I commute a great distance every day to work in this wonderful place and it has been a huge honour and a privilege to do so. Serving the students, families and community of Barnard Castle has been an experience I will cherish forever. However, balancing this with a young family has become very difficult as time has gone on. I hope you understand the very difficult predicament I faced when an opportunity to Lead on Secondary Teaching and Learning across the trust arose. I feel very fortunate that I will still have strong links to Teesdale School in my new role and will continue to support your children.

I would like to thank all of the amazing staff for their support in my time here and for the effort and hard work they dedicate to this school each and every day to make it such a fantastic place. Equally, to the students who made me feel so welcome the instant I

arrived; their talent, warmth, humour and kindness know no bounds and I will miss them all so much.

Mr Zaheer will take charge in September, he is a very experienced headteacher and already knows the school well. He will remain in place until a new substantive headteacher is appointed.

Thank you all for your support over the past two years - I will be eternally grateful!

**Anna Cleckner**  
**Head of School**