

## HEADMASTER'S WELCOME

It is a pleasure to be back at School after the Christmas break and to see our pupils return with pleasingly predictable enthusiasm and good humour, even those in the Fifth Year facing their mock GCSE examinations. They have this important opportunity to experience the atmosphere of the exam hall, and - in weeks to come when results are shared and marked papers are pored over - to reflect on whether their revision strategies are up to scratch and fit for purpose as they and the Upper Sixth turn their attention to the last term of teaching before the public examinations are upon them.

Over the break some of our pupils and staff were away on trips - the French Department took pupils on a linguistic and cultural trip to Normandy and a large group of pupils and staff went on the Senior Ski Trip to Italy. Both were a great success, with valuable opportunities for learning and broadening horizons for our pupils who will, I'm sure, be enormously grateful to the staff who took time out of their own holidays to provide these experiences.

The newsletter this week contains some sage advice from former pupil Jenifer in conversation with Ms Blakemore, perhaps most relevant to students in the Lower Sixth who will be beginning to think about their UCAS journey in the coming months. Careers support and guidance is a vital strand through our pupils experiences at Yarm, with some outstanding Career Cluster events last term and planning gaining momentum for this year's Careers Convention. We welcomed our Former Pupils to School in December

at an event after the end of term and it was lovely to catch up with so many of them and to reminisce on their time at Yarm, whether they left last year or, as was the case for some, in the 1980s! Miss Rhodes welcomed Yash, a relatively recent leaver, to last term's final Working Lunch, and you can read her report of this fascinating session below.

I look forward to another busy and successful term, and wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Dr Huw Williams



A wintry morning at school this week.

## YARM CALLING..... CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



As we wait to hear about this year's university offers, I caught up with Jenifer Umashankar, who left Yarm last summer and is currently reading Classics at Clare College.

### **What were your first impressions when you arrived at college?**

I was impressed by the beauty of Clare. I had been to Clare before on the Open Day, and the scenery was what had primarily motivated me to apply here, but it was still the most notable thing upon my arrival. The Forbes-Mellon, our college library, was also eye-catching for their vast collection of Classics books!

### **How was your first supervision?**

It was strange - my first supervision was for Latin Language, and I was the only person there. I was used to

small class sizes, having taken English and RS at A-Level, but there was something so odd about being the only one in the room. I did enjoy it, though; being the only person in the supervision meant that I could complete the work at my own pace.

Sharing a supervision with others is also an enjoyable experience, providing the opportunity for engaging discussions.

### **How far has life at university been as you imagined?**

University life is a lot more flexible than I imagined. It's a new experience, to have a choice in how I use my time; it's my responsibility to ensure an even split between work and socialising, and to keep track of my schedule, knowing where I need to be and when.

### **What are your best memories of your time at university so far?**

Some of my best memories of my time here have definitely been at Clare origami club; the laughs, snacks, and failure to learn the origami models has become something I look forward to over the weekends.

### **What advice would you give to pupils considering making an Oxbridge application?**

Make sure it's something that you want to do. Oxbridge isn't for everyone, and that's absolutely fine. Be well-informed about the structure of your course, and make your choice based on whether you think you'd enjoy studying at Oxford or Cambridge.

Knowing the environment is useful when considering making an application, too. I'd recommend going to the Open Days (after you choose between Oxford and Cambridge) if possible. The way to make the most out of an open day, in my opinion, is to look up the college websites first, shortlist ones you'd like to visit, and prioritise seeing those colleges during the Open Day. It won't be possible to go to every single college in one day.

Ms H Blakemore



## DEFINITELY NOT 'WORKING 9 TO 5': THE FINAL WORKING LUNCH OF 2024

Having last seen Former Pupil Yash Gulve (Class of 2020) in those strange times when we moved to remote teaching for the first Covid Lockdown, Miss Rhodes was keen to catch up with a student who, throughout his A levels, had expressed desire and determination to pursue a "career in the city" and was curious to hear if he had achieved his goal, so she was delighted when he expressed an interest (through his sister) in joining the Working Lunch programme for 24/24. With Yash unable to travel back to Yarm (as initially intended) due to work commitments, this was a Working Lunch through Google Meet, but the enthusiasm of Yash was still infectious and the audience hung on his every word!

After being at Yarm from Pre-Prep Year One through to the Upper Sixth, Yash had been keen to pursue his passion for Economics and he continued his studies at the University of Warwick where he completed a BSc in Economics, before joining Barclays in the TMT

(Technology, Media, Telecommunications) investment banking group as an Analyst. Having now worked as part of the team there for just over a year, he has been based predominantly in deal teams focused on Buyside and Sellside M&A. Yash clarified what his role entails, describing "a day in the life of...", as well as shedding light on a range of terms and "city" jargon. It was evident that Yash works in a highly pressured environment and that high rewards only come with seriously hard work, long hours, staunch commitment and high risks! Faced with a plethora of questions we appreciated Yash's honesty and candour and were very grateful to him for the sensible advice and guidance he offered to Sixth Formers keen to follow in his footsteps.

We are very appreciative of his generosity of time, we will follow his career with interest and hope to welcome Yash back in person to the school in the not too distant future.

Miss C Rhodes



## HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ECONBUS

Yes, it's January - Time for new resolutions and, if you're an Upper Sixth Economist, you can commit to half an hour every Tuesday at

Cluster Club!! This week we were delighted to see a wave of keen, committed, enthusiastic and motivated students battle bias,

appraise analysis and combine critique as they stretched and challenged themselves.

Miss C Rhodes

## SPORT WEEK AHEAD

The weeks ahead are now available online. You can [view them here](#).



# yarm school dance showcase

adult: £7

child: £3.50

yarm staff & pupils free

[click here for tickets](#)  
or visit [www.thepaaonline.org](http://www.thepaaonline.org)



# HOLLYWOOD

*Inspired*

## *Recycled Garment Competition*

**MINIONS**



**WONDER WOMAN**



**Cruella**



**SPIDER-MAN**

*No Way Home*



Products will be worn on  
Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February

**Eco Fashion Show**

**Senior School PAA - 6:00pm**

(tickets not required)

See Nancy Hartley-Blake or  
Mrs Jackson for details

**Barbie**



*Breakfast at*  
**TIFFANY'S**



**NO TIME TO DIE**  
ONLY IN THEATERS  
OCTOBER



*the seven year itch*



**WICKED**  
ONLY IN CINEMAS

**A NIGHT**

JOHNNY DEPP  
**Charlie**  
AND THE  
CHOCOLATE  
FACTORY



Garments constructed  
from unwanted materials.  
*Judging Criteria:*

- Use of the Movie theme
- Quality of the product
- Originality of the design

# AT THE MOVIES



## REFLECTIONS - BELLA GAFFNEY

Bella Gaffney's show, 'Reflections,' offers a captivating blend of original compositions and traditional tunes that delve into both British folk and Americana, all viewed through the lens of the troubadour lifestyle.

**Saturday 1st February, 7:30pm**

[Book Online Here](#)



## MAGIC OF MOTOWN

Seen by over a million people, now in its 18th year touring the UK. It's no surprise that this show is one of the biggest success stories in British theatre history.

Come and join us for 2025 as we reach out and show you there ain't no mountain high enough with the biggest Motown party of the year. Get ready for all the hits, glittering costumes, dazzling dance routines and outstanding musicianship in this breath-taking live concert spectacular.

**Saturday 15th February, 7:30pm**

[Book Online Here](#)



## SHOWSTOPPER - THE IMPROVISED MUSICAL

With fifteen years as an Edinburgh Fringe must-see phenomenon, a BBC Radio 4 series, a critically acclaimed West End run and an Olivier Award to their name, The Showstoppers have delighted audiences across the globe with their ingenious blend of comedy, musical theatre and spontaneity.

A brand new musical comedy is created from scratch at each performance of this award-winning show as audience suggestions are transformed on the spot into all-singing, all dancing productions with hilarious results!

**Wednesday 9th April, 7.30pm**

[Book Online Here](#)





# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

### 1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's concerning how common for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling': trawling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose, instead of endlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.

### 2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising of a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.

### 3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.

### 4 REDUCE SCREENTIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screentime; they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.

### 5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screentime can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently cut down on their screentime, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.

### 6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day where they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.

### 7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish reality from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.

### 8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox', from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screentime and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.

### 9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

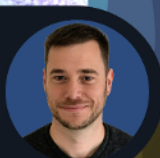
Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screentime reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.

### 10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screentime is important. Set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.

## Meet Our Expert

John Insley is a senior leader in a Birmingham secondary school and has vast experience in leading schools over the past 15 years – including the development of computing curriculums across primary and secondary schools, writing e-safety policies and supporting schools with computing and e-safety advice.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/top-tips-for-safety-on-social-media>