

Kirk Balk Academy

Summer Newsletter - July 2016

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF ACADEMY

I am delighted to be able to write to you as the new Head of Academy here at Kirk Balk. I am looking forward to continuing the outstanding work led by Ms Nolan and am confident that with her support as Executive Principal, we will go on to achieve great things.

I came to Kirk Balk because I had already been a senior leader elsewhere in Barnsley for a number of years where my role was to work in the school and help make that school as good as it could be. What I wanted to achieve in coming to Kirk Balk was not only to help guide us to becoming an outstanding academy in terms of results, but also for our success to span into enrichment and extracurricular activities for sports, arts and enterprise.

I am proud to announce that we are now participating and competing with students on a national front, most notably concerning our



ILM2C

students in the lower school who have recently represented the north of England at a national Futsal competition.

I am really excited about what we are doing here at Kirk Balk Academy and I also love my job. In such a short period of time the progress we have made has been stunning. More and more Year 11 students each year are now going on to study Level 3 qualifications at college or sixth form.

This is because, as a result of our work, more young people are gaining the gold standard of at least

five A*-C GCSEs including English and maths than ever before.

This really excites me because if this is what we have already achieved, imagine what will be achieved in three or five years' time. The prospects that we have here at Kirk Balk Academy are endless.

I look forward to working with you all in the coming months to help to ensure that all of our students continue to get the very best deal as a result of attending our wonderful academy.

D. Buckley (Head of Academy).



KBA achieves the 'School Games' mark - bronze award!

Following an outstanding year of school and extra curricular sport we have succeeded in the application for this award. To achieve this we had to meet and exceed challenging criteria set by the 'School Games' team.





END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

Parents and carers should note that students will be dismissed from Kirk Balk Academy at the slightly earlier time of 12:30pm on Tuesday 19th July 2016.

The Academy re-opens to all students at 8:00am on Tuesday 6th September 2016. Lessons will begin at the usual time of 8:45am.

As we approach the end of a very successful year, it would seem timely to write to parents and carers to share some of our significant highlights from this academic year and indeed to communicate some key information.

KEY DATES FOR THE 2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR

Term dates

Autumn 1	Tue 6th Sep-Wed 19th Oct
Autumn 2	Mon 31st Oct-Fri 16th Dec
Spring 1	Tue 3rd Jan-Fri 17th Feb
Spring 2	Mon 27th Feb-Fri 7th Apr
Summer 1	Mon 24th Apr-Fri 26th May
Summer 2	Mon 5th June-Tue 25th Jul

Inset days

Monday 5th September 2016
Thursday 20th October 2016
Friday 21st October 2016
Friday 2nd December 2016
Friday 30th June 2017

Parent's evenings

Year 7	Tuesday 4th October
Year 7	Tuesday 25th April
Year 8	Tuesday 10th January
Year 9	Tuesday 6th June
Year 10	Tuesday 9th May
Year 11	Tuesday 18th October
Year 11	Tuesday 28th March

Full details of all holiday and Inset dates can be found on the academy website.

A YEAR IN REVIEW - HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2015-16.

STUDENT NUMBERS ON ROLL

Student numbers at Kirk Balk Academy will rise significantly for the third consecutive year from this September with 245 students from across the authority opting to join in year 7.

This new cohort replaces our leavers in year 11 and takes the total academy population above 1100 students.

VISITS FAR AND WIDE

Kirk Balk students have travelled further, in greater numbers, and to more exciting destinations, as part of extra-curricular trips this year.



A total of 1124 have been able to take the opportunity to participate in a range of educational and once in a lifetime trips. These have included:

- 263 students accessing PE/sport trips;
- 50 students attending the Ambition Barnsley event;
- 501 students assessing science trips to either Chester Zoo or the National Space Centre;
- 49 Y8 students visiting the theatre with the English department, with another



English residential trip to London later in the term;

- 45 Y11 students visiting the Christmas markets in Dusseldorf;
- 116 Y11 students conducting Geography fieldwork in Castleton;
- 50 Y11 students attending a 3 day Maths residential;
- 170 students visiting Barcelona for a water sports trip.



Opportunities on offer for the next two years include a ski trip and a trip to New York, as well as numerous subject led trips to sites within the UK.

FIRST WORLD WAR CENTENARY AMBASSADORS

To mark the 100 year commemorations of the great war, the history department opened up an opportunity for two Year 8 students to take part in a unique project with other schools in Yorkshire.

The project involves researching the impact of World War One on their local Barnsley community and to then share this information with the school and local community.

A large number of students applied and those who were successful will be visiting the battlefields later this year. There will also be an opportunity for the current year 9 to visit France and Belgium on a battlefields tour next summer.



EXTRA CURRICULAR SPORT

PE extra-curricular has continued to go from strength to strength' with high levels of student participation and some notable team and individual successes.

On a weekly basis, over 200 students participate in after school sports clubs including: boys' football, boys' rugby, dodgeball, trampolining club, gymnastics, badminton, table tennis, athletics, rounders, girls' football, girls' rugby and cricket. This year, 54 students have successfully completed the nationally recognised cricket leaders course.



- * Y7 South Yorkshire futsal champions;
- * Y8 & 9 South Yorkshire futsal champions;
- * Y9 netball league winners;
- * Y7 netball league runners up;
- * Y7 indoor athletics Barnsley champions;
- * Playing in U13 Yorkshire cricket final;
- * Playing in U12 & U14 national futsal tournament.



SPORTING SUCCESSES

- * Alice Moore – South Yorkshire cross country champion;
- * U13 Barnsley indoor cricket winners;
- * U12 Barnsley rugby union tournament winners;
- * KS3 Barnsley badminton champions;

PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Sam Ackroyd (Picasso House) has successfully applied for a scholarship at one of the most prestigious public schools in the world.

Following a lengthy process of visits, exams and interviews Sam will begin studying A Levels in chemistry, physics, maths, further maths and politics, in September.

The whole community of Kirk Balk Academy is very proud of Sam and wish him every success in the future. He is a role model for what our students can aspire to achieve.



PARENTAL FEEDBACK

Over 400 individual parent questionnaires have been completed following parent's evenings. Of these 98% agreed their child feels safe, happy, well looked after and well taught at Kirk Balk Academy.



A further 96% agreed that their child is making good progress, and 99% agreed that they would recommend Kirk Balk Academy to another parent.



STEM CLUB

STEM club students have undertaken a range of scientific projects during the year including making their very own volcano, a marble run, a Jelly Baby wave model and a renewable energy project.

MATHS CHALLENGE

67 year 7 & 8 students were involved in the UK Maths Challenge in May. This national event challenges students mathematical ability and rewards those who are especially talented. Of all the Kirk Balk students who took part, 21 achieved a bronze award, 3 a silver award and 1 student a gold award.



HOUSE CHARITIES

The first year of Kirk Balk Academy's house system has seen charities and good causes benefit from fund raising activities totalling £5,350.

The charities adopted by students in the individual houses are;

- ~ NSPCC for Da Vinci house,
- ~ Blue Bell Wood children's hospice for Shakespeare house,
- ~ Sports Relief for Franklin house,
- ~ Marie Curie for Picasso house.



Events organised by students have included a sponsored triathlon, christmas chocolate raffle, cake sales and non-uniform days.

BARCELONA WATER SPORTS TRIP

170 students from years 8, 9 & 10 attended a 9 day residential water sports trip to Cala Llevado, near Barcelona.

During the trip students had the opportunity to take part in sea kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, snorkelling, and sailing. They also visited Barcelona and Europe's largest water park.

In the evening students were given the opportunity to go climbing, take part in archery and complete a number of evening challenges set by the excellent staff from Acorn Adventure.

Students stayed at the Acorn Adventure centre in Cala Llevado where they could also enjoy a private pool and games complex.

TRANSITION SUCCESS AS STUDENT NUMBERS RISE

Kirk Balk is committed to a child centred transition process in which the individual needs of students are identified and supported. In order to achieve this we work in close collaboration with our partner primary schools to share information and ensure year 7 students are appropriately challenged from the very first lesson.

The success of this transition process, and indeed an indication of the massive strides made by Kirk Balk as a whole, is evidenced by the great increase in the number of parents choosing the academy for their child's secondary education. The 199 students in Year 11 who left following their exams this summer will be replaced by 248 students entering in year 7. This increase means that Kirk Balk Academy is over-subscribed and has led to the local authority agreeing to increase the pupil allocation number to 270 students per year group from September 2017.



The transition process of year 6 students to Kirk Balk began more than a year ago. Every year 5 student attends a half-day visit in order to familiarise them with Kirk Balk. Some students are also selected by their primary school to attend one or more of our master classes which are one day events hosted at Kirk Balk. In the autumn term our partner primary schools hosted Kirk Balk staff and students to meet with year 6 students to answer questions and distribute invitations to the open evening.

In order to ensure effective collaboration between Kirk Balk and our partner primary schools, monthly pyramid meetings are held between the primary head teachers and representatives from our senior leadership team. Regular SENCO pyramid meetings are also held to ensure information is shared about the most vulnerable students.

This year has also seen the first joint learning walk in which primary staff jointly observed a range of lessons at Kirk Balk and held meetings with some of their ex-students.

This year's year 6 transition week has been the biggest and most successful yet. Not only have students met their new class mates, found out which house they will be in and taken part in lessons, they have also created a public art mural, planned and created a whole school video, taken samba classes and participated in a mini olympics.



UNIFORM

At Kirk Balk we place great emphasis on the appearance of our students and we feel this provides students with a distinct uniform that they can wear with pride. I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to our uniform expectations; please do bear these in mind before purchasing any new items of uniform

- **Trousers** - plain black school trousers or official Kirk Balk Academy skirt
- **Shirt** - white shirt with stiff collar
- **School tie and blazer**
- **School jumper** - purchased from the uniform supplier can also be worn.
- **Footwear** - plain black footwear (no boots unless poor weather as indicated by school).
- **Coats** - plain, waterproof, single colour outer coat with no prominent logo (no other outer garments e.g. hooded tops or sweatshirts).
- **Hair** - natural colours only and no inappropriate styles (we reserve the right to judge each individual case on merit).
- **Jewellery** - one pair of small studs to be worn at the base of the ear lobe and a watch if desired (no other jewellery is permitted).
- **Ties** - appropriately worn tie compulsory for all students.
- **Tights** - must be either skin colour or black and must not be worn with socks.
- **Socks** - plain black or white (no knee length socks).
- **Trousers** - must not be tucked into socks (no leggings, footless tights or knee high socks for girls).
- **Make-Up** - discrete make-up can be worn but any excessive make-up will have to be removed.
- **Nail Varnish** - clear nail varnish and clear or french acrylic nails only.



A REMINDER ABOUT OUR P.E. KIT

Kirk Balk P.E. department have high standards and expectations around kit. Please refer to the relevant page on the Academy website for further information.

The new Academy PE kit is compulsory for all students from September 2016 and, as such, parents and carers should purchase new P.E. kit from our provider, Vortex, prior to the start of the new academic year.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

A reminder that all Kirk Balk students must have the necessary equipment to maximise learning. It is an expectation that students have a school bag which contains a pencil case and the following equipment: pens, pencils, ruler, coloured pens/pencils, pencil sharpener and a calculator for mathematics.

Please ensure that your son/daughter arrives with the necessary 'tools of the trade'.



FOND FAREWELLS

At the end of this academic year we bid farewell to Miss Cook, Miss Tompkins and Mr Stokes. I would also like to share a special mention for Mrs Blackwell who leaves Kirk Balk this summer after **38** years teaching in the science faculty.

On behalf of everyone at the Academy I would like to thank each of these colleagues for the contribution that they have made to Kirk Balk and wish them all the very best for the future.

HELLO AND WELCOME

We are delighted to welcome a host of new teaching staff to the academy from September 2016. Miss Skelding will take up the post of assistant director of English with a focus on continued improvement in English outcomes in this outstanding department.

We have also appointed the following NQTs for September: Mr Dransfield in the English faculty, Miss Senior in the music department, Mr Nazami in the humanities faculty and Miss Turner in the MFL department.

Additionally, the following staff will be returning to Kirk Balk as NQTs after completing their initial teacher training with us during this academic year; Mr Exley & Miss Cadman in the science faculty, Mr Baines in the ICT faculty and Miss Brown & Mr Ambach-Davies in the mathematics faculty.

FINALLY ...

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very pleasant summer break and I look forward to speaking with you again in the new academic year.



Ms J. M. Nolan
Executive Principal



Mr D. Buckley
Head of Academy

The One Academy Rule

All students and adults are expected to behave in a responsible manner, both to themselves and others, showing consideration, courtesy and respect at all times.