

Kirk Balk Academy

Summer Newsletter - July 2017



publications such as the Barnsley Chronicle. If you have missed any of our announcements or publications, please visit the Academy website where we share all our information and good news.

'no limits' to what we can achieve. This is something we try to instil into all members of our academy and which will continue to form a large part of our ethos next year.

We have some fantastic new colleagues joining us in September, who have chosen to work at Kirk Balk Academy because of the unique culture and ethos that we are cultivating. I am really excited about what we are doing here at Kirk Balk Academy. In such a short period of time the progress we have made is stunning.

More and more Year 11 students now go on to study Level 3 qualifications at college or sixth form. This is because, as a result of our hard work, more young people than ever are gaining the 'gold standard' of at least 5 good GCSEs including English and Maths. This really excites me because if this is what we have already achieved, imagine what we will be achieving in three or five years' time. The prospects that we have here at Kirk Balk Academy are endless!

We are all looking forward to greeting our wonderful students back on Tuesday the 5th of September.

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF ACADEMY

It is a privilege for us to work with your children here at Kirk Balk Academy. Helping young people to develop and understand themselves and the complex world in which we live is a thrilling business.

Throughout the year there have been many highlights and it has been so pleasing to see that several of these have been recognised in



Alex's story is of particular interest to our community; this year 7 Roller Hockey player was selected to represent Team GB in the Junior Olympics. Alex returned from Los Angeles recently brimming with pride as a gold medal winner!

Alex's story is a reminder that when we work hard, apply ourselves every day and continually seek to be the best we can be, then there really are

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

For the second year running Kirk Balk Academy has been successfully awarded a School Games award. Following on from our Bronze award in 2016, the academy has now received the Silver award. Stunning result!



In addition to refreshing your memories about our uniform expectations (included in this letter) please also remember that the timings of the academy day have changed following the recent consultation. As ever, full details and previous correspondences are available on our website.

Before then, we have a summer holiday to enjoy. I wish everyone connected with the academy a revitalising break. Recharge your batteries and come back excited to learn, ready to develop and equipped to deal with whatever the new academic year may bring.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our great academy.

Mr D Buckley (Head of Academy)



KIRK BALK ACADEMY CELEBRATE BARNSELY SCHOOL ATHLETICS WIN...

A starting block from which to launch future success.

In July, the PE Department took around 70 students to Dorothy Hyman Athletics Track to compete in the 2017 Barnsley Schools Athletics Competition.

Our students have been preparing for this event during lessons, in extracurricular clubs and at practice events for the past three months, and throughout the day it was clear that our hard work and dedication was beginning to pay off!

The 70 students from across all year groups were exceptional in their performance, attitude and behaviour. They were a credit to the Academy.

Looking back over the athletics records, Kirk Balk has not achieved an overall 'top three' finish in fifteen years.

This year, however, our students were crowned the 2017 Barnsley Schools Athletics Champions.

Considering we are a relatively small school, this is a truly outstanding achievement!

M. Hill (Specialism Coordinator)

CURIOUS STUDENTS STEM FROM EXTRA- CURRICULAR INVESTIGATIONS

Over the year, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) club has been running weekly, providing fun, engaging and educational activities for our Y7 and Y8 students.

Activities have ranged from kidney and heart dissections, designing a volcano including homemade lava, and replicating life size models of the cells found within our bodies.

Not only does STEM club ignite interest in STEM subjects, it also builds on students' passion, providing them with a deeper, broader, and varied knowledge of Science and Maths.

The students who have consistently attended STEM club have always contributed 100% effort to any task they have been faced with. The students eagerly apply their newfound knowledge to their classwork.

With smiles on their faces, they have paved the way for future Kirk Balk scientists, engineers, and mathematicians.



KEY DATES FOR THE 2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR

Term dates

Autumn 1	Tue 5th Sep 2017- Wed 25th Oct 2017
Autumn 2	Mon 6th Nov 2017 - Fri 22nd Dec 2017
Spring 1	Mon 8th Jan 2018 - Fri 9th Feb 2018
Spring 2	Mon 19th Feb 2018 - Fri 23rd Mar 2018
Summer 1	Mon 9th Apr 2018 - Fri 25th May 2018
Summer 2	Mon 4th June 2018 - Fri 20th Jul 2018

Inset days

Monday 4th September 2017
Thursday 26th October 2017
Friday 27th October 2017
Friday 29th June 2018
Monday 23rd July 2018

Y10 WW1 BATTLEFIELDS TRIP: A Historic Success

REPORT OF MR M GODDEN

In June, 30 Year 10 students along with Mr Godden, Mr Davies, Mrs Fell and Miss Pemberton visited the WW1 Battlefields in France and Belgium.

It was an action packed trip! In the first day we visited Beaumont Hamel, the site of the fighting at the Battle of the Somme, then the memorial to the missing at Thiepval. However, the highlight was a visit to Serre, the site where the Barnsley Pals went "over the top" in the Battle of the Somme on 1st July, 1916. In total, the Barnsley Pals suffered over 500 casualties on the Somme, so it was a very poignant moment when student Katie L laid a wreath on behalf of the Academy at the memorial for the Barnsley Pals.



In the evening, we attended the Last Post Ceremony at Menin Gate. This ceremony takes place every evening at 8pm. While there were hundreds of tourists attending the ceremony to pay their respects to those who gave their lives in WW1, Kirk Balk students were especially privileged to take part in the ceremony. Charlie E and Lauren N did a brilliant job of representing the school.

After a meal and good night's sleep at the hostel, there was more sightseeing to be done. At the Passchendaele museum, we visited what was an advanced WW1 dressing station called Essex Farm (where injured soldiers were taken from the Front Line), before visiting the spectacular Tyne Cot memorial where nearly 12,000 soldiers are buried.



Overall, it was a unique, and once-in-a-lifetime trip, during which the students represented the school in an exemplary manner from start to finish.

A STUDENT'S ACCOUNT - By Chantelle Brookes (Y10)

As a student who attended the 4-day Battlefields Trip, I have been asked to document my experiences which I can assure were both sentimental and eye-opening to the tragic events that occurred before, and after the 1st of July 1916.

During our visit, we went to various memorials with the first being the Barnsley / Accrington Pals where Kirk Balk students stood in the place of the 'front line'- this was quite difficult to imagine from the tranquillity of the area.

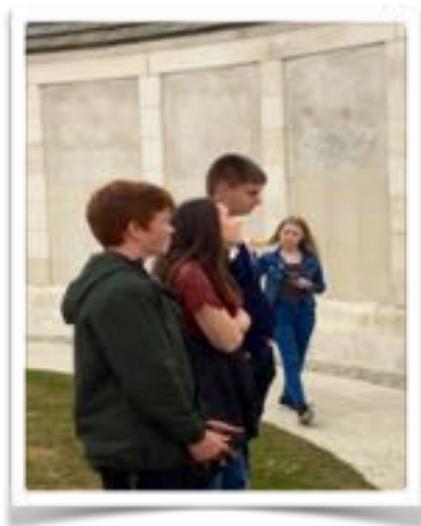


Each pupil was given a small wooden cross with a poppy, to be placed in an area dear to them. I placed

mine near the grave of G. Brookes... Throughout the trip the tour guide (Steve) and the bus driver (Neil) told us several interesting stories that were attached to a particular grave; these stories included background information on soldiers as young as 15 as well as the soldier who was the inspiration for the story 'Peter Pan'.

Personally, my two favourite parts were discovering the stark difference between the German memorials in contrast to the other ethnicities and the Tyne Cot Cemetery. Most memorials opted for the traditional

white grave stone with Regiment Badges engraved above the name or quote, whilst German memorials used the colour black on the plaques and crosses seen at the Langemark Cemetery we visited.



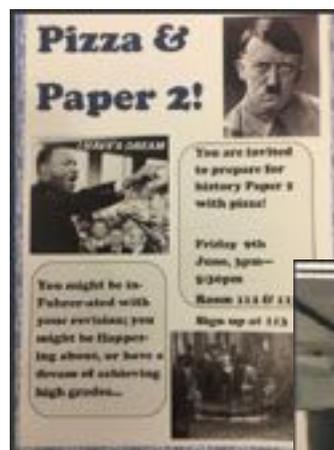
One of the things I clearly remember someone saying was 'imagine each grave as a person'...this became very daunting at the Tyne Cot Cemetery where 11,954 soldiers rest making it the largest Commonwealth Military Cemetery in the world.

Overall, the experience brought to life all the facts taught at school, making them memorable and relevant. The trip was truly memorable as it brought everyone together either when travelling (especially on the ferry) or when joining together to pay respects for the fallen.

AN APPETITE FOR SUCCESS

Students opt for a pizz-a revision

Picture this: fifty sixteen-year-olds choosing to spend their Friday evening studying History at school...



On Friday 9th June, over 50 Year 11 students attended a "Pizza and Paper" revision session.



Students took the opportunity to go through critical content ahead of their second GCSE History paper.

Working well into Friday evening, the students certainly deserved a slice or two of pizza for their excellent efforts and positive mentality.

A special thank you to Mr Godden, Mr Balmer, Mr Lane, Mr Kavanagh and Mr Gilder for staying at school to allow the session to run so smoothly.



HIGH PRAISE FOR ACCELERATED READER HIGH ACHIEVERS

The first year of Accelerated Reader at Kirk Balk has been a resounding success. Both teachers and pupils alike are dedicated and committed to improving literacy and fostering a love of reading across the Academy. Year 7 and 8 students set a brilliant examples for our students in the upper school.

Below highlights some of the many successes and incredible achievements that our lower-school students can boast this year.

- ☼ Emily D has read the most words in Y7 for the girls- 6,119,761 words
- ☼ Alfred F has read the most words in Y7 for the boys - 2,715,988 words
- ☼ Ellie Mae S has read the most words in Y8 for the girls - 2,164,425 words
- ☼ Callum S has read the most words in Y8 for the boys - 2,099,595 words

In total, Y7 have passed 5154 out of 6530 reading quizzes.



☼7Y3 have passed the most quizzes, 761 out of 923!

☼7Y5 have taken the most quizzes with a super total of 990 quizzes.

Y8 have passed 4555 out of 5901 quizzes.

☼8X1 have passed the most quizzes, 671 out of 773!

☼8X4 have taken the most quizzes with 955 quizzes. Wow!

This school year, students have read of 9709 books which adds to a total of 262,695,139 words!

And finally, a special congratulations to the incredible 52 students who are enrolled in our “Millionaire’s Club” because they have read a whopping 1 million words!



PERFECT PROM:

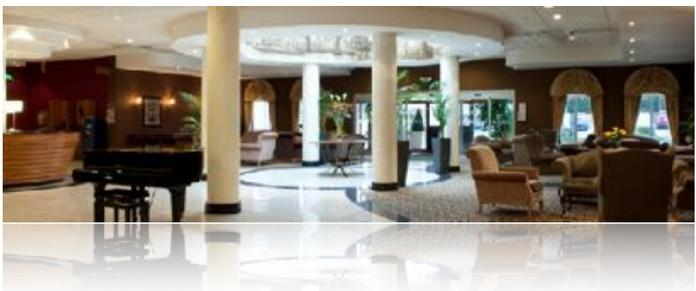
A worthy send-off for an outstanding group of students

The year 11 Leavers Prom took place on Friday 30th June at the Holiday Inn in Barnsley.

More than 150 students attended, with more than 40 staff eager to celebrate what has been a magnificent year. The magic mirror and photo booths proved to be very popular along with the ‘selfie’ props!

A great time was had by all.

The night ended with staff and students alike dancing and singing to Sweet Caroline. I would like to thank all the students who attended for their exceptional behaviour on the night and bid them farewell and good luck in their future studies.



UNIFORM

All students are required to wear the Academy uniform. The Academy uniform should not be altered in any way, for example by adding clips, badges or stickers. Skirts must not be adapted; this includes folding them over at the top or wearing a bobble in them. Trousers must not be “taken in” to reduce the width of the leg. Blazer sleeves must not be rolled up.

Please note also that school shoes must be plain black (no trainers, boots, pumps or canvas shoes) and should be of a polishable material.

So that parents are in no doubt, can we please take this opportunity to draw your attention to our full uniform expectations; please do bear these in mind before purchasing new uniform over the summer.

All year groups:

- ◆ Plain black school trousers or skirt only – purchased from Vortex with the Academy logo on. (no denim, canvas, cord, low rise, skinny or fashion trousers or skirts allowed)
- ◆ White shirt with stiff collar
- ◆ School tie and blazer (sleeves cannot be rolled up)
- ◆ School jumper purchased from the uniform supplier can also be worn.



- **Footwear** – Please see revised guidance above.
- **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 and must cover all shirt buttons.
- **Tights** - 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/Nail Varnish** - Discrete make-up can be worn but any excessive make-up will have to be removed. Nail varnish and acrylic nails are not allowed.



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’.

OUTSTANDING ART

Congratulations to all of our GCSE art students for the phenomenal work they have created as part of their final project. A Sample of work can be found below.



Brooke M
Exam final piece based on 'Surroundings'.



Adele D
Exam final piece based on 'Out of Place'.



Georgia M
Exam final piece based around 'Assemble'.



Bethany H
Exam final piece based around 'Assemble'.



Oriana B
Exam final piece based on 'Detail'

CREATIVE CORNER

Authors write their names into Kirk Balk History

In November, the Young Writers' national creative writing competition recognised nine of our talented Kirk Balk students for their excellence by publishing their original stories in the "Phizz-Whizzing Words" anthology. The careful creations of Shanesse G, Shannon B, Zoe B, Evie S, Cole R, Dominic R, Stephanie B, Morgan S, and Amy T are in black and white, printed and bound, shelved with pride in our very own library!

In February, Pijus B (then in year 11), won second prize in the Barnsley Young Poets "Hear My Voice" competition and read his poem at an awards ceremony attended by the Mayor of Barnsley and Yorkshire Poet Laureate Ian McMillan. Georgie M and Amelia S, brilliant, insightful Kirk Balk poets, won commendations in the same competition.

In April, four Kirk Balk writers submitted their 100-word Micro-Fiction stories to another Young Writers' competition, in which they had to create their own utopian (or dystopian!) "Wonderlands". Michael B, Ellie-Mae T, Emily D, and Pijus B have all been honoured with publication in the anthology, due to be printed this month! This is Pijus' second win this year, and considering all of the revision he's done for his GCSEs, his achievement is particularly impressive!

Not only have seventeen of our students earned local recognition, and national publication for their creativity and brilliance, but Jessica R was shortlisted for the high-profile "BBC 500-words stories competition", from a huge 131,798 entries from across the country!

The Creative Corner writers, mentored by Ms Stevenson and Mrs Copley, continue to thrive, create, and be recognised for their hard work and talent. Kirk Balk is incredibly proud of their efforts and successes, and waits eagerly to hear who will be next to pen success!

PARENT PAY

Important news about on-line payments for catering and trips

As Kirk Balk is heading towards being a cashless Academy, the preferred method of payment for school meals and trips is the on-line payment system.

Please note that from September we will be changing our on-line provider to Parent Pay. Please do not make any payments to Squid after we break for the summer. Any remaining balances will be transferred as usual to your child's lunch account. Please make sure you cancel your automatic top ups, allocate any trip payments and then close your Squid account. You will receive a letter with the details needed to set up a Parent Pay account. Current users of Squid may find the Parent Pay system more user friendly. If new year 7 pupils already have a Parent Pay account they will be able to transfer the account to Kirk Balk. Please contact the Academy if you are changing address over the summer to ensure that you receive your Parent Pay account details.

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. [Please follow our academy Twitter account @kirkbalk.](#)



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.