17 January 2025

RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

Barnsley Road, Doncaster
DN5 7UB
01302 783939

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you have had a great week. As usual, I have provided a number of updates followed by a Curriculum Spotlight on our Performing Arts Faculty.

Y11 reminders

Our English and Geography Faculties use an online programme, GCSEPod, to support student revision. GCSEPod are offering a free webinar for Y11 parents on how to best support their child's revision and wellbeing through these crucial months. This will take place on 28 January 2025 from 5pm–5.30pm.

For more information, and to sign up, please use the link below:
https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/e3a77ded-b053-4cda-9df0-ea0a219b666a@739195a1-f5d6-4d9a-ac42-a1dbb7c7413d

If your son/daughter is intending to apply for Ridgewood Sixth Form, but hasn't yet done so, please encourage them to complete their application as soon as possible. We will be holding more one-to-one meetings on Monday 27 January to make conditional offers.

Y9 updates

We look forward to seeing parents/carers and students at the Y9 Guided Choices Evening on Thursday 23 January and then in your 1 to 1 meeting, to support your son/daughter as they make these important decisions.

The Maths Faculty are running a visit to Bletchley Park for Y9 on Friday 7 March. Due to the Christmas break, we have extended the deadline for sign up until Wednesday 22 January. If your child would like attend, please ask them to obtain a permission slip from their maths teacher and return by Wednesday.

New Build Progress

You will no doubt have seen from Barnsley Road the impressive pace that our new building is progressing. A number of our Student Council members, and GCSE Construction students, had the fantastic opportunity to take part in the Steel Signing Ceremony this week. Photographs of the event are available on our Facebook page.

Parentpay Debt

I would like to remind parents to check their child's ParentPay account to ensure that there is sufficient money on the account to purchase a school meal. If a student has accrued a debt on their account, they will only be able to purchase the £1.95 meal deal until this is cleared. If a student who is entitled to free school meals has a debt on their account, they will only be able to purchase food and drink at lunch time (not break time) until this is cleared. All students have access to water at school from the water fountains so please ensure a reusable bottle is brought to school each day.

We will be contacting all parents of students who have debt on their account. Should the debt not be cleared, parents must provide a packed lunch for their child until it is paid. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the school.

Curriculum Spotlight – Performing Arts

The Performing Arts Faculty vision is 'Performing Arts, Performing Always'.

The team aim to use their specialist skills to equip students at Ridgewood with the gift of music and performing arts knowledge and realise their creative instincts through the process of acting and sound creation. We want to inspire young people not only through their classroom provision but by providing students with the opportunities to participate in national and local performing arts community projects, live events and the co-curricular offer.

Drama

The Drama curriculum aims to develop students' knowledge of a wide range of practitioners, theatre styles and play texts. Lessons are largely practical and focus on developing performance skills which improve self-confidence and communication skills.

In year 7, students begin with developing their non-verbal characterisation skills through a mime unit. In the Spring term, students continue to develop their skills using script extracts taken from texts such as Matilda and the Terrible Tale of Humpty Dumpty. The students end the year by exploring genres of Melodrama and Greek.

In year 8, students commence the year with a focus on the style of Pantomime with the culmination of a group performance prior to Christmas. During the Spring term, students focus on scripts extracts taken from the play text 'Missing' by Dan Nolan before moving on to Alice in Wonderland in the summer.

In year 9, students explore play texts from the Yorkshire practitioner John Godber. During the Spring term they devise drama from stimuli taken from the song 'Tell me why', before concluding their Key Stage 3 performance journey by exploring naturalistic and non-naturalistic styles focusing on practitioners 'Stanislavski and Frantic Assembly.

Students can then opt to take the Level 2 qualification 'BTEC Performing Arts Tech award' which focuses on an acting pathway and includes a mixture of practical based workshops, rehearsals, performance and written coursework/assessments. In Sixth Form, students can continue their study at Level 3, gaining a greater breadth and depth of understanding.

Music

The curriculum and teaching in Music lessons aims to provide students with the opportunity to realise sound. This is done by developing instrumental and vocal performance skills, composing music, listening critically to different styles and genres of music and using appropriate technologies.

Students in year 7 start with a vocal performance unit focusing on Opera. They then begin to embed these fundamental musical elements across the Spring and Summer terms and develop their understanding of rhythm and notation composing their first piece of music. They then build on understanding and learn about harmony and chords and finish the year learning about different musical ensembles.

In year 8 the focus is on developing students' composition and performance skills, along with further exposure to styles. The students begin by learning about the genre of hip-hop, and compose and produce a rap and hip-hop track. They then explore performance and composition through Western African drumming and Blues music and finish the year learning about popular band instruments and forming their own rock band.

In Year 9, students begin the year with a music technology focus and create sounds for a short film trailer. They then develop their composition skills and write a popular band song and finish the year developing their music technology skills further, by composing a piece of music focusing on production-based sampling.

Students can then continue their Music Technology journey at Key stage 4 by opting for the Level 2 NCFE Music Technology course. Students explore roles and responsibilities in the industry, the development of recording technology, they become experienced at using DAW software and how live sound and studio recording and production works.

Extra-Curricular

Outside of the curriculum, the Performing Arts Faculty contribute to the wider development of the students with a range of opportunities in the after-school enrichment programme. This includes groups such as the KS3 drama club, vocal group, mixed instrumental group.

Students have the opportunity to perform termly in concerts and shows, events include Ridgewood Young Performer, the Christmas show, the Summer Showcase and the annual production which this year is The Wizard of Oz.

The Faculty work in partnership with a number of professional companies including Arts International, Right up our street and Music in the Round to provide as many opportunities for music making and live theatre experience.

Annually, the team invite visiting practitioners and companies to showcase live theatre performance, music events and all students who opt for the courses at key stage 4 and 5 visit facilities such as recording studios and professional theatre spaces. We also work closely with Doncaster Music Hub to provide instrumental and vocal lessons for all students who wish to opt for these.

In September, we were delighted to receive 'Centre of Excellence in the Performing Arts' accreditation from Arts International.

If you have any questions about the Drama/Music curriculum, please use the 'contact us' facility on the school website, for the attention of Mrs Moran, Curriculum Leader – Performing Arts.

I hope you have a great weekend.

Yours faithfully

Andy Bridge
Associate Headteacher