A Word from the Head Teacher

I am delighted to say our Parent Focus Group has voted in a new Chair and we are keen to see the group develop its role and benefit all the students at Bingley Grammar.

At the moment our Parent Focus Group is quite small and we would like to encourage you, as parents and carers, to get involved.

Over the years the Parent Focus Group has acted as a sounding board for many of the changes that have happened in school such as this newsletter, our Launch Evenings and improved communication, to mention but a few.

The group has also held a variety of events and as a result has funded items in most faculties which are used in school to further our student’s learning.

Please read the letter written by our PFG Chair, Wendy Rowan >>

There are several ways to get involved:
- Become a member of the committee who meet half termly in school
- Become part of a wider bank of parents willing to help at events
- Come along and support the events which in turn support the school

We really appreciate all your help and support.

Mr Luke Weston
Headteacher

My name is Wendy Rowan and I have been successfully nominated as Chair for Bingley Grammar School’s Parent Focus Group. The Parent Focus Group is quite low on active members and at the last meeting the ‘small’ group discussed a way forward. It was agreed that we need to raise the profile of the group in order to gain more support from other parents.

We decided it might be a good idea to try and focus on parents of the younger end of school, especially the parents of current year 6 who will be joining us in September and then build on that.

In order to do that we need some support from parents who already have children at BGS. With that in mind please could you let me know if you are able and willing to help out at one or more of the following events, ideally we need four parents at each of the four events below:-

- Year 6 Transition Evening on July 3rd and 4th – 6.15 – 7.30 pm
- Year 7 Parents Evening on July 12th 5 – 8 pm
- Celebration/Awards Evening on July 19th Years 7 – 10 (time to be confirmed)

The idea is that at the above events the group can do refreshments and a tuck shop where appropriate or simply have a stand where we can promote what we do. Moving forward into the next academic year we can use these school events to also sell tickets for the next Fund Raising Event coming up that term.

In order to create an achievable plan and not be too ambitious it was agreed that the PFG would hold one large event each term during 2017/18, current ideas are as follows - this may change,

- Autumn Term - A Race Night
- Spring Term - A Quiz night
- Summer Term - Some kind of International Food Event

However none of these will be a success if parents do not help out, so at this moment in time the Parent Focus Group would appreciate any help you can offer, however small that help is. So if you could reply to this letter by emailing us at parentfocusgroup@bingleygrammar.org and let us know three things;

1. Can you help out at one of the evening events, running the refreshment stand? If so which one/s?
2. Would you (and your friends) be interested in attending any of the current suggested fundraising events? If not is there something that you would like us to put on?
3. What would you like to see the PFG doing in order to raise funds to benefit students at BGS?

Any feedback/suggestions would be great.

We look forward to your reply,

Wendy
Bradford Schools Awards

On Thursday 9th March a group of our staff enjoyed a fantastic evening celebrating the achievements and hard work that goes on in Bradford schools at the T&A’s Bradford School’s Awards.

We were all welcomed to the event by the Editor of the T&A, Perry Austin-Clarke, addressed by Mark Garrat (Director of External Affairs at University of Bradford) and Councillor Imran Khan (Executive Member for Education, Employment and Skills, Bradford Council). The evening was hosted by Charlotte Leeming, BBC Look North presenter, and the keynote speaker was the inspirational David Hyner, Trainer, Author and BBC Broadcaster.

We were over the moon to be shortlisted and highly commended in three categories; Community Involvement (for our work supporting the BRI’s Children’s Ward), Voluntary Contribution (for our continued support of the National Citizen’s Scheme and our students accessing the amazing opportunities on offer) and Secondary Teacher of the Year (for Miss Shah’s incredible work offering extra-curricular opportunities and enrichment to her subject Religious Education).

Highly Commended: Voluntary Contribution Award
Our ongoing support of the NCS (National Citizen Service) scheme was recognised by Claire Higgins, the NCS Bradford Engagement Leader, for our widespread advocacy and enthusiasm for the NCS throughout the school. Last year 45 Year 11 students took part in the NCS involving social action, leadership and a week-long team-building and confidence building field trip. The NCS staff couldn’t speak highly enough of all our students who stood out as fantastic ambassadors for the scheme and our school.

Highly Commended: Community Involvement Award
This year we have been recognised for our ongoing work with the BRI and the New Children’s Wards both for our fundraising efforts and the relationship we have built with the hospital staff over the last two years. Mrs Roberts, Mr Brown and all our staff are hugely proud of our student’s efforts in raising money for the Children’s Ward and we feel the relationship has opened doors to many opportunities for our students such as interior design workshops, hospital visits and extremely valuable work experience.

Highly Commended: Secondary Teacher of the Year - Miss Shah
We value all our teaching and Support staff and Miss Shah is a great example of how our fantastic staff make such an effort to offer enrichment to support their subjects. Miss Shah runs an Amnesty Youth Group as well as the Archbishop of York Award group in school. Miss Shah has also introduced the school to Holocaust survivor Arek Hersh who has visited Bingley Grammar four times now giving our staff and students an insight into his early life during WWII. We greatly value Miss Shah’s extra-curricular work and are extremely pleased she was shortlisted for this award.

Congratulations to all our staff and students who were recognised for the work that goes on in and around Bingley Grammar School. Belong Grow Succeed!
Fairtrade Gastronauts

Mrs Wilkinson’s lunchtime food science club has been focussing on Fairtrade produce and the importance of Fairtrade for communities around the world.

Over the last few weeks, the Gastronauts celebrated Fairtrade fortnight by learning about how the cocoa bean is grown, fermented and processed into chocolate. The group learned about farming co-operatives, discussed the climate and financial aspects that affect the cocoa supply chain. Our students eloquently explained the human cost of producing such a product and the very small amount of money the farmers get paid for their hard work. The students watched a video to explore all things fair trade while drinking hot chocolate and sampling fair trade chocolate/bananas.

In the second week the Gastronauts made yummy Fairtrade chocolate pots. The group talked about the importance of buying and using Fairtrade ingredients and about the exploitation of farmers in other less developed countries.

Keep posted for news as the group are taking a break from cooking to form their own Year 7 Fairtrade action group in school. If any Year 7 student would like to join us pop into T15 on a Wednesday lunchtime. You can always get involved by supporting our events in school, coming up..... a pop up Fairtrade smoothie bar - all made and managed by the Gastronauts!

4LC Maths Competition

On Friday 17th March, a group of our Year 7s joined students from four primary schools in a times tables competition.

Our students were invited by the Primary schools, along with students from Beckfoot School, to assist the teams in the competition.

The schools taking part were Crossflatts, Eldwick, Saltaire, and Priestthorpe Primary. The students answered individual and team questions and each school did brilliantly. It was so close in fact that a tie break question was needed at the end to determine the winners.

The competition was won by Saltaire Primary who took the title from the reigning champions Priestthorpe.

Miss Hall was extremely proud of all our students, some of whom overcame their shyness to help the younger children win points for their teams. Well done to all those who took part and helped to make the event a success.

Y13 Psychology Trip

Our year 13 Psychology students attended a Psychology revision support workshop at the Vue cinema in Leeds on Tuesday the 21st March and were absolutely outstanding.

They got involved with all aspects of the day and represented the school positively, with three of our student’s (Shareen Rashid, Natasha Zubair and Carla Mann) all winning prizes for contributing and demonstrating an excellent level of psychological knowledge. May I also commend Lucy Topham and Mrs Newton for their teacher-student pairing for a musical knowledge and Approaches in Psychology round. A superb day.

Miss Seeley
On Saturday 18th March, students from 12 primary schools and 5 upper schools gathered at Shipley Pool for the annual Bingley Schools Swimming Gala Finals.

Bingley Grammar were pleased to enter two teams this year, Bingley A and Bingley B and both teams swam extremely well. It was an exciting evening - the standard of swimming was high and there was lots of support from families and friends in the viewing area. We had students from Year 7 through to Sixth Form competing for the school which was lovely to see.

Our Bingley A team took gold in the Secondary Schools’ Mixed 4x2 Relay Team Championship as well as winning the Senior Championship overall with an amazing 89 points! Beckfoot A took Silver with 70 points and our Bingley B team took Bronze with 47 points. Titus Salt were in 4th place with 47 points, St Bede’s & St Joseph’s took 5th with 43 points and Beckfoot B came in 6th with 39 points.

We are extremely proud of our swimming teams and appreciate what great ambassadors for the schools they are. Many of the team have been assisting with coaching the primary school teams in the build up to the competition and we would like to thank all the team for their efforts. Go Bingley!

Finally, we would like to thank Bingley Amateur Swimming Club for holding this amazing event every year for Bingley’s young swimmers - it really is a fantastic event which all the schools involved really value.
British Science Week 2017

Our Science department celebrated British Science Week and the theme of ‘Change’ this month.

Year 7 students studied our chicks which were supplied to us by Living Eggs. We watched the eggs hatch and over the week have seen the chicks develop. This has also linked into the curriculum subject of reproduction and changes throughout the life cycle. The chicks stayed with us for 2 weeks and have now returned to living Eggs to be re-homed on a free range farm.

Our Year 7 and 8 students also looked at changes in energy by making catapults. Classes were split into teams to build their catapults and studied how elastic potential energy changed to kinetic energy as the catapult was fired. The teams then competed to produce the best catapult and score the most points firing pompoms at a target. This activity great fun and gave some surprising results.

We have also had lots of students hunting for the members of staff wearing our Scientists badges and linking them to their inventions around school - we’ve had a great Science week in school, thank you to all our Science staff and students who have taken part.

Harry Raises Thousands for Charity Liam’s Smiles

Two years ago, Year 9 student Harry Doyle started a charity with his Mother called Liam’s Smiles. Liam is Harry’s little brother who was born with pneumonia and has been suffering from complications caused by the illness ever since.

Two years ago, Year 9 student Harry Doyle started a charity with his Mother called Liam’s Smiles. Liam is Harry’s little brother who was born with pneumonia and has been suffering from complications caused by the illness ever since.

Harry and his Mother have worked tirelessly to raise money to ‘create future smiles’ and last year they held a hugely successful charity ball which raised an amazing £23,000 for Meningitis Now.

Liam’s Smiles are holding their second dinner dance and charity auction at Bradford City FC on the 1st April where Gary Poulton (from BBC1’s The Apprentice) will be hosting.

This year Liam’s Smiles will be donating money to the national mental health charity Heads Together which is committed to helping change the way we talk and think about mental health in the UK.

Harry is extremely passionate about his charity work and spoke with our Archbishop of York Young Leaders recently about the difference they can make to communities and people in need.

Miss Shah said,

“Harry was inspiring and has encouraged my students to pursue their dreams and goals no matter what obstacles come their way.”

We are extremely proud of Harry for his commitment to his charitable work and hope this year’s charity ball is a great success. For more information visit the charity’s website: http://www.liamssmiles.co.uk/

Twitter @Liamssmiles05 Facebook @Liamssmiles
During February half term a team of teachers from Bingley Grammar School and Crossflatts Primary visited schools in Nairobi to work on projects with their students.

In addition to this, our Assistant Headteacher David Foster, representing the UK based Pixl group of schools, assisted Jamhuri High School and Ngara Girls School with data analysis alongside the Kenyan Ministry of Education.

Mr Farnaby secured some sponsorship with bike manufacturer Frog and we were able to take 7 bikes to use with the reception children in City Primary School, Arya Primary School and a children’s project in the well-known slum of Kibera. Mr Farnaby, with help from Mr McGregor, led coaching sessions for groups of children, including some with autism.

Science teacher Miss Cane was also making her first visit to Nairobi and she led a number of engaging science lessons in both high schools alongside the teachers from Kenya.

And finally Miss Hurst, reception teacher from Crossflatts Primary, worked with early year’s learners, including some with autism. She is the second teacher to accompany us from Crossflatts Primary School.

Since the programme began a total of 16 teachers have visited Kenya, all with the aim of developing their leadership skills in challenging environments. A visit to the slum of Kibera is an emotional affair and has a profound effect on those who are fortunate to interact with the children there.

We also take donations and gifts to the schools to support the students learning and help the schools with basic supplies which we take for granted in the UK. We would like to thank Pelsis, a pest control company, who generously donated 16 first aid kits as well as a vast amount of pest control equipment. The staff at each school were so pleased to receive this equipment and were grateful to get help for the massive problem of pests in Nairobi.

We would also like to say a big thank you to St Oswald’s Brownie troop in Guiseley who donated games, crayons, paper and learning activities to the Kibera Kids Club. And finally, thank you to a local family (who would rather remain anonymous) who also made a donation to Aspire Sports, Edna Rotich’s charity - raising money to support families in the north of Kenya struggling with the worst drought in living memory.

Jamil Parapia - Kenya Lead and Director of MFL

To read our team’s individual accounts take a look at the Kenya news story on our school website >>
Visiting Authors - We welcomed three published authors into school to work with our students throughout the day. Matthew Wooding, author of 'Letters to Nan' and 'No Place Called Home', Linda Coggin, author of 'The Boy with the Tiger's Heart' and 'The Dog, Ray' and Paula Rawsthorne, an award winning author of the young adult novels 'The Truth about Celia Frost' and 'Blood Tracks', spoke with students about their inspirations and their experiences of being an author. They ran workshops encouraging students to begin writing their own novels and our students really enjoyed the time they spent with them.

Creative Writing Club - Our Creative Writing Club students spent Wednesday 1st March with Mr Crawford working on an exciting project - the group have begun writing a collective novel entitled 'Bad Day at Bingley Grammar'! Mr Crawford explains, "When the school comes under siege by crooks posing as Ofsted inspectors, a pair of intrepid Year 7 students come to the rescue and save the day with the help of school bully Jake Puncher. The students each tackled a section of the story - it is currently being typed up and edited for continuity, and will be released soon. The group worked really hard on this and we are looking forward to seeing how it comes together."

Book Pledge Web Page - Our Book Pledge web page is now up and running! Students and staff have been given a log-on to a BGS website where they can record books read between now and the end of the year. The target is a minimum of 3 books per person, that's a total of 7,500 books in a year!

Click here to visit our reading pledge page, log your books and help us reach our target >>

Book Fair In the Library - Mrs Varley and Mr Crawford ran a book fair in the Library which was a great success. Students in Year 7 and 8 were given tokens to purchase books and we encouraged students to try out a new genre or author. Thank you to our Parent Focus Group who gave an extra book token to each Year 7 student doubling the amount they could spend at the fair. The Book fair was a great success and we raised £539.00 in free books for the school!

We hope all our students enjoyed the World Book Day events in school and that they continue to read for pleasure and explore many different worlds through books.
Teaching & Learning Research at Bingley Grammar School

We are keen to improve teaching & learning by utilising research effectively. A selection of teachers from across the school are undertaking Masters degrees to facilitate improved understanding of learning. Our approach is to review different literature, undertake action research and evaluate the impact of our work. We welcome teachers talking about learning and reflecting on how we can enhance the experience of our students.

Robert Booth – Director of Humanities & Social Science

I have been looking at how students acquire, retain and apply substantive knowledge in History lessons. This involves different approaches and strategies in lessons. We have integrated the role of low stakes testing on a regular basis within lessons to monitor how students retain specific knowledge. Such tests involve short answers to specific questions and vary in length. Often they start at 10 questions and can become more detailed if necessary. The key is to allow students space between the first time they have acquired the knowledge (perhaps through reading, different activities in class, watching a documentary, analysing an image etc.) and when you conduct the test. The assertion is that this act of memory can strengthen the initial knowledge acquired and it also provides both students and teachers instant information as to whether key pieces of knowledge are missing or there are any trends within the class. Therefore, you can adapt subsequent phases of the lesson to react to this. It can also form the basis of a quiz league which I have initiated with my Year 12 class studying the early and mid-Tudor period this year.


Sam Ninson – Maths Teacher

As part of my M.A in Education I am researching the extent to which marking and feedback strategies employed by a teacher/school affect pupils’ progress. The following findings have impacted my teaching greatly. It came to light that marking and feedback given by teachers could be effective and positively impact students when given more regularly and timely, specifying clear areas that students needed to improve on to make progress in their subjects. This was highlighted by the responses received from the student survey. For instance, some students indicated that regular feedback enables them to monitor their own progress and identify areas of strengths and/or weaknesses.

Secondly, in the study, other students revealed how designing a checklist after feedback is given to them enabled them to monitor their own progress. Effective feedback should therefore link to the learning objectives and success criteria recognized for the work. From my observations, it showed that students could tell which success criteria they were to focus on to show that progress had been made.

The research also showed that, many students would prefer a section in their books or work where they could go back to show that progress has been made. I call this “a showing progress page” in pupils’ books. In other words, giving them a second opportunity to assess their learning and indicate that the feedback they have received has had a positive impact on their learning. Thus, it is imperative that when we (teachers) provide feedback, we ask questions. I employed this idea of showing progress in students’ work for 3 of the classes I teach. For these classes progress was made as evident in test results. This seems to suggest that a ‘showing progress page’ in students’ work is pivotal as it allows for monitoring areas where progress have been made in order to discard wrong ways of doing things.

In a nutshell, the study highlighted three main areas where the “Think Pink Go Green” could be enhanced. These were identified as: marking being done regularly (weekly or fortnightly) and timely (rather than delayed); using checklists with specific success criteria to monitor students’ progress; and creating a “showing progress page” in students’ books to provide learners the opportunity to show that they have made significant progress against the success criteria. These methods would result in learners taking greater ownership of their work and being more engaged in the learning process. This can only be achieved when a suitable environment is created for them by teachers.
The group delivered an excellent assembly to Year 7 on the Life of Anne Frank and what they learned at the Anne Frank and You exhibition. Year 7 is made up of approximately 300 students but the group held their nerve and came across really well. Finlay said he enjoyed it as it was a new experience and he now has more confidence speaking in front of a group of people.

On Thursday 23rd March the group were Ambassadors at the Kala Sangam Centre in Bradford and showed two classes of students from Lapage Primary school in Bradford around the Anne Frank and You exhibition. They used their training to teach the students about Anne’s life and current conflicts happening in the world and what can be done to stop hate crime. Miss Shah is very proud of the students, saying “they all worked really hard to give the younger students an informative and engaging experience.”

This week a smaller group were invited to take part showing important people of Bradford around the exhibition and speaking about what they had learned. Earlier in this month the group spoke with Yr 9 student Harry Doyle who is heavily involved in charity fundraising. Inspired by his talk and moved by Harry’s experiences the group held a charity bake sale raising £161.88 for Harry’s charity Liam’s Smiles.

Finally, the Young Leaders have also met with Mr Foster to discuss positive changes that they would like to make in their school community. Watch this space for updates!
Easter Concert

Last night’s Easter Concert was a great success showcasing our many talented musicians and singers. A full review of the evening will be on the website next week and in next month’s magazine. For now, here are some photographs from the event: