



July 2019

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

The last few weeks of a school year always seem to speed up with so many things to pack into this half term.

Our art exhibition is always stunning and it was great to see such a breadth of work from year 7 all the way to the GCSE final pieces. We all enjoyed Sports Day, especially as the rain held off, and it was great to see such positive competition between the houses. The school show is always such a fantastic event and 'The Wizard of Oz' this year has been a great success. It is such a delight to see our students showcase their talents and work together as a team to produce a fantastic show. As usual, our year ends with our three activity days. These days provide such a rich experience for our students and weave together interesting and fun activities with lots of opportunities to think about careers and next steps.

Our year 9 and 10 students have this as a key focus and will all be spending some time at a university and thinking about their options after year 11. Year 10 have an important final day as they experience an interview with an external employer – it is great to see them come dressed in work attire and recognise the benefits they receive from this process. These few days are a huge organisational feat and I would like to thank all of the staff involved for their planning and enthusiasm at the end of a busy term in order to provide these enriching experiences for all of our students.

The end of a school year is also a time to reflect on the events of the year and look forward to the next. A major aspect of this year was seeing our first year 11 cohort complete their GCSE exams. They coped extremely well and don't quite believe me when I tell them how calm they all were. This has also been recognised by year 10 who are now gearing up for the same. It is testament to how well prepared our students have been throughout the years and how effectively they have learnt and applied a variety of study and revision skills. Real highlights of this year were the year 11 leaving day assembly and prom. Both were such joyous occasions, full of fun, laughter, reminiscence and a few tears. We do miss them.

It is also exciting though to be looking forward. Refurbishment plans and works have already started to create our Sixth Form common room and we have been planning our training days and the start of term. A big focus for the staff next year will be undertaking a curriculum review. This is a theme that many schools have as a focus as we all respond to a new Ofsted framework that has a heavy curriculum emphasis. Subject leaders in school have already been working on this and enjoying deepening their understanding of the complexities of curriculum planning and purpose.

One element of sadness that we face at the end of a school year is saying goodbye to members of staff who are leaving us for pastures new. This year we say goodbye to the following staff:

- Miss Emblad – Learning Support
- Mr Mander – Data and Examinations Officer
- Mrs White – Teacher of Science
- Mrs White – Teacher of Mathematics

I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their contributions to NFS and wish them all the very best in their next ventures.

Please do take the time to look through the many other items in the newsletter which give a flavour of this term. Please also make note of the adjusted timings to the start of the academic year: year 7 and 12 start a day earlier than the rest of the school to help aide transition.

May I take this opportunity to wish all of our students and families a well-deserved rest over the summer break and a big thank you for all of your support over the year. We are very blessed to have so many families who are strong supporters of our 'work hard be kind' ethos and join with us to make this a working reality.

Kind regards

Mrs Jenny Brown



Some alterations to the start of term and parents evenings

Please note the following key days and times for the start of the next academic year:

| Date | Details |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Monday 2 September | First day back for year 7 and 12 students only. Year 7 arrive by 8.20am Year 12 arrive by School day finishes at 3.35pm |
| Tuesday 3 September | Years 8 -11 start back. School starts at 8.20am and finishes at 3.35pm |
| Wednesday 4 September and onwards | All years in school – normal timetable and school timings. Please see school website for timings if unsure |

Starting next academic year, all days with a parents evening will have slightly adjusted timings. All students will finish at 2.15pm and parents evening appointments will run from 3.30pm – 6.30pm.

This is to enable staff to prepare appropriately for these events.

All key dates for next academic will be populated on the calendar section of our school website.

Maths Challenge National Final - NFS go to London!!

On Monday 17 June aspiring mathematicians from across the UK competed against each other to lift the prestigious winner's trophy at the National Final of the UKMT Team Maths Challenge 2019.

The National Final of the Team Maths Challenge, which is run by the UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT), took place at the Royal Horticultural Halls in London and involved teams of four students from Years 8 and 9 competing in:

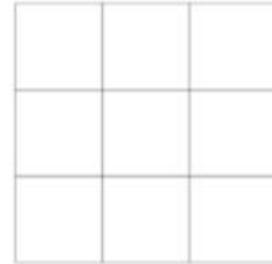
- a group circus involving hands-on maths problems;
- a series of shuttles in which the answer from one question feeds in to the next;
- a crossnumber (mathematical crossword);
- a relay race combining physical and mental agility;
- a poster competition based on a mathematical topic.

Over 1700 schools entered the competition and the best 88 qualified to take part in the fiendishly testing grand finale.

As winners of the regional final, the team from Nottingham Free School (consisting of Viktor Harrison, Yousaf Mughal, Jaydon Rakkar and Dilan Whittle) represented the school and themselves amazingly well. They worked hard as a team and fought hard for every point despite having to be up at 4am to make it down to London in time.

The word *facetious* contains the five vowels in alphabetical order.

Place the letters *F, A, C, E, T, I, O, U* and *S*, with one in each blank cell, so that adjacent letters horizontally are a prime number of letters apart in the alphabet.



Problem 5 of the Group Circus Round from the Team Maths Challenge 2019 National Final

Italy Sports Tour



NFS went on their FIRST EVER sports tour, taking 44 students to Lignano Sabbiadoro, Italy. With a day trip to Venice, some great sport played and finished off with a disco, everyone had the most amazing time; with lots of fun, laughter and impeccable behaviour.

Football



Both the U13 and 15s football teams competed against two other schools from around the UK in the SportFest tournament. Both teams competed with excellent spirit, determination and desire.

The U15s went in all-guns-blazing against a school from Croydon, coming out on top with a 3-0 win. They then went on to lose their second game, under tough circumstances, but

the boys gave it their all.

The U13s are a new side in transition, and had not played together before. There was some excellent football and sportsmanship shown by all students involved. Unfortunately they lost in both games, but demonstrated what a fantastic team they could be in the future.



Netball

Both the U13 and U15 netball teams took part in the SportFest Italy cup, against schools from all over the UK. Both teams played excellently, with the U15's winning 4 of their 8 games and the U13's coming out as champions.



The U13s played their tournament on Thursday morning against 11 teams from England and Wales. The girls were in Pool A for the first 5 games and qualified for the quarter finals in style; including 2 clean sheets! The quarter-final was a sloppy game but we scraped through to beat Blessed Thomas School in a 3-2 victory. This put us in the more difficult Cup Competition whilst the runners-up went in to the Plate Competition. We steamed ahead in to the semi-

finals, determined to work our socks off and we did exactly that! Beating Sirius school 2-1! The final came in front of a huge crowd, against Skinners Kent School. At full time it was 2-2 and we were then in to extra time at the end of extra time it was 3-3! Then the words that no teacher wants to hear...GOLDEN GOAL! Skinners won the centre pass on a toss-up, which was crucial considering how evenly matched the sides were. They made an error in the centre third which resulted in a turn-over the ball was sent-in to Ruby Neal whose nerves of steel sent the ball in to the net for the victory! An unbelievable team effort with special mentions to our reliable captain Aimee, unreal interceptions from Liv and a form second-to-none from Bella. SportFest Italy 2019 Champions, tears from the girls, gold medals and a trophy to remind Mrs Brown that we need a trophy cabinet! AMAZING!!



Y9/10 Girls Rounder Finalists



The Y9 and 10 girls competed in the Nottingham Rounders finals. Overall the girls came 3rd out of 16 schools who entered. They showed fantastic commitment and team spirit along the way.

The Great Big Dance-Off: National Finalists!



14 Year 7, 8 & 9 girls, who are a real mixture of abilities but who love to dance, made it to the Regional round of The Great Big Dance-Off, in February. They then qualified as THIRD out of the whole of the East Midlands, to make the National Finals; held in Cheltenham on 25th June 2019; which is an unbelievable achievement.

Mrs Singleton-Jones choreographed a piece with inspiration from the amazing example our school and students set by being supportive of all faiths, beliefs, choices and identities. The piece was called 'Love is Love' and was a predominantly lyrical/contemporary dance, which tells the story of two girls who want to love each other, but whom feel isolated by some people's views of same-gender relationships. The piece showed the girls surrounded by judgemental people whose minds they set-out to change. The dance was pro-pride and we wanted everyone to feel proud to love whoever they choose to.

The girls practised as often as they could, but this was mostly at lunches because of our extended school day where we all have different timetabled extra-curricular options!

The girls loved being able to perform at the Nottingham Royal Albert Hall and were all so proud to make it through to the National Finals of the Great Big Dance-Off after all of their hard work. The top 5 schools in the country were announced at the finals and we didn't make the top 5, however this does not take away from what was a fantastic achievement and brilliant experience.

Year 10 Prefects/Head Boy and Head Girl:

Staff have recently voted on the new prefects who represent our students and school. Our new prefects are:

Matthew Baggaley
Yusuf Iqbal
James Mottram
Seth Richards
Max Truman
Finlay Wilson
Heidi Dean
Emily Dimambro-Mosscrop
Ruby Duckworth
Robyn Edwards
Saira-Bano Mehmood
Kiera Winter
Zara Najeeb

We are also proud to announce that James Mottram and Saira-Bano Mehmood have been voted Head Boy and Head Girl. All students have made an excellent start to their responsibilities by supporting with Year 6 Transition Days. They showed prospective year 5 students on the open evening and James and Saira delivered an outstanding speech to their parents.

Next year will be a busy one for the prefects but we look forward to them being reading buddies and subject mentors.

6th Form Taster Days

On the 26th and 27th of June, NFS opened its doors to prospective Sixth Form students, in preparation for the new Sixth Form opening in September this year. It was great to see lots of familiar faces returning to NFS, however we also met some new students whom everyone enjoyed getting to know.

The morning of the 26th included meeting the Head of School and the Head of Sixth Form, who delivered an informative presentation about possible extra-curricular activities and responsibilities that the Sixth Formers will have next year. It was great to hear a couple of different suggestions from other students, and it is exciting to think that as the first cohort of Sixth Formers, we will have an active role in shaping the Sixth Form and the school community.

The following morning began with a more reflective activity in which we were asked to think about our own personal plan and ideas about life after Sixth Form, and it was inspiring to hear about all the different ideas people had for their futures!

On both days, we all seemed enthusiastic and enjoyed the subject taster sessions, with one student commenting that 'going to the taster days gave me so much insight into A-level subjects and helped put the sixth form at NFS into more perspective' while another student commented on how they found the subject tasters 'very helpful and provided a clear, realistic insight into what to expect in September.'

Overall, both taster days were successful and many interesting conversations took place-including a plea to get a Sixth Form pet!

Molly Doran

The First NFS Prom



The evening of Saturday the 6th of July saw the very first prom of Nottingham Free School take place at Colwick Hall, and it is safe to say that it was a huge success. Despite some drizzle in the morning of the highly anticipated and long-awaited prom, by 7pm the weather had brightened to leave a clear blue sky- the perfect backdrop for hundreds-literally hundreds-of photos in front of the fountain.

Everyone arrived in style via a range of different transportation, from stretch limousines to vintage cars decorated with ribbons-and the range of outfits was even more impressive. Special mention to Lucy Adkin and Zehran Shazad for being crowned Prom Queen and King!

Upon entering the marquee, we were greeted by drinks and hand-made favour bags- complete with positive points and an NFS keyring! The evening followed with a three course meal, questionable dancing from the students and staff alike (particularly from Mr Takpaul), and plenty more photos in front of the river. Highlights of the evening have to include the heartfelt and humorous speeches by our Head Boy and Girl, Jake Ghattora and Aamina Sharif, that left us all feeling slightly sentimental, but this was quickly replaced by laughter as four of our more musical teachers took to the stage to serenade us with their renditions of various nostalgic songs from the past 5 years- shout out to Miss Wilson, Mrs Inglis, Mr Cleveley and Mr Tomasevic for forming the 'C4s Band' and adding a little twist to our evening.

A big thank you to Mr Cleveley and Mrs Machan for all their hard work organising the event-it was an amazing way to end our journey as the first cohort of Nottingham Free School and we know that future proms will also be great.

Highfields Trip Year 7



Year 7 students were kept really busy on this trip as they had to complete a geographical and scientific investigation on microclimates, go pond dipping (without falling in) and finally an orienteering challenge around the park. We would like to commend Year 7 on their geography and science skills and attitude on the day; well done for being superstars.



Duke of Edinburgh

Well that's our 2019 Duke of Edinburgh expeditions over. We had 6 bronze and 3 silver teams who all passed their expedition, although it wasn't without its trials and tribulations! We battled constant rain on the teaching weekend which left us all damp and cold, scorching heat for the practice expedition and incredibly loud sheep at antisocial hours on the qualifying expedition. The students have shown fantastic resilience, determination and teamwork along the way. Unfortunately some students were unable to complete the final expedition, but all who took part should be commended on their efforts.

There was a bit of a learning curve after the practice weekend but by the qualifying expedition all teams were off site by 8:30am and the campsite was immaculate. A massive thank you to parents who transported the students to various small villages and helped pack and repack bags and of course thank you to all the staff who have supported the Duke of Edinburgh award at Nottingham Free School. We are incredibly proud of everyone who has been part of our adventure.



Sherwood Art Exhibition



We held our third annual art exhibition as part of Sherwood Arts Week on 28 June. It was our first time showing year 11 work so it was quite a revelation to the younger year groups! All year groups had the opportunity to show case their work and students were thrilled to come and show their families what they had created this year in art.

Miss Radford created an elite baking and sales team who took charge of the cake stall and did an excellent job raising funds to ensure the event can run again next year! We also had some fantastic student volunteers who helped welcome visitors and run the art activities for children and some adults who had a go too! Thank you so much to all of you who attended the exhibition, the students were so proud and we had a really good turn out with lots of people attending. We look forward to our 4th exhibition next year which will be featuring A Level work so watch this space!

Year 9 and 10 Geography Fieldwork

128 students from Years 9 and 10 Geography made the journey to the Derbyshire town of Castleton in the Peak District National Park. After a long journey on windy roads, we eventually arrived and started to undertake our fieldwork to find out an answer to our inquiry question **Does tourism only have positive impacts on Castleton?** The students visited six different areas in the town and completed a variety of fieldwork techniques such as environmental quality surveys and traffic counts. Luckily the weather stayed sunny with many students enjoying local delicacies such as fish and chips and ice cream. Well done team Geography, a great trip!



Sports Day 2019.

On Wednesday 10 July all of Nottingham Free School students took to the field to compete for their house and personal glory! It was a tremendous day, with fantastic effort and energy from all students. The year 10's have left their legacy in their last ever sports day with athletes beating nearly all of the current school records. With all of the effort there can only be one winning house, and for the first time in Nottingham Free School history Hawksley took the crown. A huge congratulations to all students and a big thank you to all staff who help make sports day possible.



1066 and All That

This half term our Year 9 GCSE History students have been learning about the Battle of Hastings in 1066. History was brought to life when students re-enacted the battle scene on the MUGA (multi use games area). There were mocking laughs to be heard from the Anglo-Saxons who were overly confident about their shield wall as the Normans tried everything to break it and failed. But eventually, thanks to William's initiative (and maybe also thanks to his pirate flag aka. the Papal banner), his archers with their super strong plastic bows (only two broken ones), cavalry (with no horses but who were good at fake trotting) and infantry, were able to encircle the Anglo-Saxons who had fallen for the Norman trickery known as the feigned retreat; the mocking laughs were over!



Harold Godwinson lay (painfully on concrete) dead on the MUGA with the Normans chopping at him with their plastic swords. The battle was over and William had won...although there wasn't much time for celebrating as the battle participants had to make a speedy dash to their next lesson!

Big City Reads

Year 8 and Year 9 students attended the first Big City Reads event at Nottingham Council House on Friday 12 July. The students spent the morning in the company of four authors from the four nominated Big City Reads books. They listened to the authors discuss the influence for their stories and heard a live reading of an extract from their books. They had the chance to ask the authors questions and were given copies of the books that they were able to have signed by the authors. They were supported by their Literature Ambassador from the school: Danica Bowles.



Activities Days

The theme for this year's activities days was careers and students had a whole range of activities and opportunities organised for them. With trips to University for years 9&10 as well as some exciting in school workshops provided by both staff and external providers. Year 10 even took part in interviews. A massive thank you to the very kind employers who volunteered their time to come in and help our year 10s become work ready!



Years 7 &8 had a range of career based activities in school such as workshops in forensic science, solving a Victorian crime scene, creating their own textile print and learning about quality control in food. We also had student volunteers from Nottingham Trent University come in and deliver sessions about higher education and university. Some lucky students also got to learn about publishing and met author Darren Simpson who read them some of his published book 'Scavengers' and talked to them about his career as a published author.

All year groups also had the opportunity to attend an exciting outdoor activity day at Kings Mill Adventure Base, the activities included rafted canoes and sit on kayaks, high ropes, low ropes, tunnelling and zip wire!

All in all students had a varied last three days to finish the year!

Meet The Author



On Thursday 18 July Nottingham Free School were lucky enough to host a local author, Darren Simpson. He spoke with Year 7 students as part of their careers themed activities about being a writer. Darren spoke to the students about the main themes and characters of his first novel, Scavengers, before answering questions about what it is like to be a professional author. Students also got the chance to have copies of the book signed by the man himself.

NFS Goes East

During the Easter holidays I had the honour of taking 10 students from Years 9-11 to China. The adventure started at 2:30am where we boarded a bus at Bramcote College, as we were going to be sharing some of the itinerary with students from Bramcote College and Alderman White. After some much needed sleep we arrived at Gatwick airport and flew to China. Due to time differences we landed in Shanghai in the early hours of the morning and after waiting for what seemed like forever for the other schools to sort out the biometric visas we made our way to the hotel for a couple of hours of sleep before a full day of sightseeing.



After two days of seeing the sights of Shanghai and getting used to the time difference we made our way to Ningbo, Nottingham's twinned city and home of our sister school - Siyanqi middle school.

Last year some of the students from the school had visited NFS and everyone was keen to meet up with people they had met and remained in contact with. Students enjoyed spending time in lessons with their buddies, helping out in English lessons and beating the competition in sports lessons. Our students were also really popular during break and lunch time!

Speaking of lunch the students 'enjoyed' the same food as the Chinese students - Fish heads anyone? While I was treated to different food in the teacher canteen which was very nice. Students also learnt how to make traditional dumplings and calligraphy as well as some taking part in belly dancing lessons.

On leaving the school we were treated to some excellent performances and our students sang, played the piano and performed magic and we were presented with some lovely gifts from our new found friends.

We explored Ningbo, including the local MacDonald's, as our hotel was hosting a top secret government conference which led to the communal areas being out of action.

We all had a great time experiencing the Chinese culture, visiting new sites, eating new foods and making new friends and we are looking forward to hosting students from our sister school again soon and organising a repeat visit to China.

Mrs Douglas



Attendance Party

On 16 July students with 98% plus attendance for the year attended a party. It started with watching Alex from year 7 doing some dancing to Just Dance, which was very much enjoyed by all. Later on Miss Detton walked in with 6 large Pizza Hut pizzas (3 margherita and 3 pepperoni). The students then got to watch the Lego Batman Movie which was very good

Thank you to all teachers that helped organise the party, all students enjoyed it a lot.

Henry Davidson, Year 7

Wizard of Oz

On Wednesday 17th and Thursday 18th July Nottingham Free School aired their production of The Wizard of Oz.

The lead up to the event was a process of creativity and excitement as roles were cast from years 7, to 10. Dorothy, Neive Sewell, was a singing success in her blue pinafore and red ribbon accompaniment, ToTo played by Jesse Richards loyally by her side throughout and Noah Coates-Gill embodied the clumsy body of the Scarecrow perfectly. The Tin Man, played by Elizabeth Perry was rigid in all the right ways and The Cowardly Lion, Faith Raymond, was a ROAR-ing success!

The songs transported the audience back to their first hearing the music of the iconic film, including Somewhere Over the Rainbow and Follow the Yellow Brick Road. The dancers and the background characters, such as the Munchkins, added to the overall effect that every member of the audience was, also, in Oz.

As expected, the process was fast paced and at times, convoluted with the complexities of coordinating a large scale production, but ultimately it all came together as a feast for the eyes and ears. Miss Wilson has coordinated a fabulous production that was creative and fresh whilst also respecting the original film version, and overall audiences really enjoyed the experience.

That is a second successful school show for Nottingham Free School, and we cannot wait to see what next year has to offer!

STAR Reading Tests and Accelerated Reader

Reading for pleasure is the single most important thing that will make a child successful in life.

UNESCO, 2011

All students take the STAR reading test three or four times a year so we can monitor their progress with reading and find out their reading age. In years 7-9 those whose reading age is below their chronological age are placed on the Accelerated Reader (AR) Scheme where they are directed to a reading level and required to do tests on these books. Students are targeted to reach an 80% pass rate in a term and to read at least 15 minutes per day. This is recorded on the Knowledge Organisers. GCSE exams have a reading age of 15 years so it is important that every student who is not at their current age works towards this.

We ask all parents/carers to encourage their children to read over the holidays; books from school, books they have at home or visit your local library.

We had four word millionaires this year, students on the AR scheme who have read over one million words in the year. Congratulations to Elizabeth Perry, Momina Hussain, Linden Rose and Jode White.

Library

The library has taken delivery of many new books this term, many requested by students such as the Manga books. We have also had collections of the CILIP Carnegie shortlist books and those chosen for the Big City Reads for Nottingham 2019. The Big City Reads have been especially popular. Students are always welcome to suggest books they would like to read or those that they have read that they think others should read as well.

Overdue Library Books

We currently have 84 books that have been overdue for four or more weeks, the value of which is over £550. Parent(s)/Carer(s) of these students will have had an email or letter requesting the return of these books. We ask that the book is returned, but if it cannot be found then a replacement is purchased or the value of the book is paid to the school office.

Whilst we do not issue fines for overdue books, students are regularly reminded that they have an overdue book through their school email account and by their tutor. We would ask all parents/carers to encourage students to return or renew their book when they receive the first email. Replacing these books would take away from purchasing new books for all our students.

GCSE Results Day Arrangements & Sixth Form Enrolment

GCSE results will be available for collection from School on Thursday 22 August 2019, from 9am to 12pm. Teachers will be available for consultation in regards to sixth form options, potential re-marks, etc. Sixth Form enrolment will also take place that day.

Dates for your Diary

22 August 2019 – GCSE results day and sixth form enrolment

2 September 2019 – First day back for Year 7 and Year 12

3 September 2019 – First day back for Years 8 – 11

4 September 2019 – Year 11 Information Evening

5 September 2019 – Year 10 Information Evening

12 September 2019 – Year 9 Information Evening

20 September 2019 – Whole school individual photos

25 September 2019 – Year 6 Open Evening

16 October 2019 - Year 9-11 Parent Forum

6 November 2019 – Post 16 Open Evening

26 November 2019 – Year 11 Parents' Evening

4 - 5 December 2019 – Year 10 Trip to York

5 December 2019 – Year 7 Parents' Evening

10 December 2019 – Pantomime Trip – All years

12 December 2019 – Christmas Concert