



Eskdale School



Friday 16th September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

At the end of the second week of this new term, I'd like to take this opportunity to let you know what a positive start we have had here at Eskdale School. I feel honoured to be Head of School and have been humbled by the kind welcome I have had from staff and pupils, despite the gentle teasing about my choice of football team! It has been a pleasure to meet so many lovely pupils and members of staff.

The pupils have begun the year engaging in their studies positively and I have seen this first hand in classes highlighted by impressive work in Year 11 maths, Year 10 English and Year 9 RS lessons. Pupils have shown themselves to be inquisitive learners with a capacity to think and problem solve and that is most encouraging. After all, the core reason for being at school is to learn and seeing pupils motivated to be their lessons and learning is what we expect here. I'd like to congratulate them for that approach and for beginning the new term so smartly.

Our uniform unites us as a school community and adhering to it is our expectation, so again, congratulations to the vast majority who have done so. A reminder to all that one set of stud earrings are permitted with no other piercings allowed and leggings and hoodies should not be worn at school. All the staff would value parental support on this matter to avoid negative conversations with pupils. I'd also like to remind parents that financial support may be available from school should that be an issue regarding uniform. Parents can contact the school in confidence on this matter.

Elsewhere in school, new routines and practices are being established and those that remain are being reinforced with movement around the site increasingly calm and organised. Our Year 11 have begun morning targeted academic support sessions in their core subjects with Heads of Department leading the teaching. Non-core support sessions will begin soon and details of those will be coming to Year 11 parents and pupils. All our Year 7s (like me!) are getting used to a new school and after a fantastic transition programme lead by Mrs Bradley in the summer, they have settled superbly. It is no mean feat handling a new school and a two-week timetable! Well done, Year 7. Tutor time is being purposefully used with our Year 8s, in particular leading the way here, whilst Year 10 have begun their GCSE studies earnestly and Year 9 have engaged well in the wider range of subjects on offer to them.

Some of our other new innovations include the opening of a Restorative Room to help pupils reflect on their mistakes and educate them on making better choices and this is working well for the pupils who need that support from the experienced staff that man that space. Mr Jones, our SENDCO and his team in the SEND department have opened the Garden Room and the Rose Garden for some of our more vulnerable pupils to access at social times. This is a super development and shows our commitment at Eskdale to be a truly inclusive school.

Staff here go above and beyond, and the burgeoning extra-curricular programme is not something that happens in every school. Earlier this week I called into our eco-club which runs at a lunchtime under the guidance of Mrs Winspear and Miss Kotadia. They are starting a business in school with the aim of reducing the amount of clothing going to landfill and helping our community with the ever-increasing cost of living. If you are having a clear out of your wardrobe at home please consider donating your no longer needed clothes to our Eco Club so that we can get this exciting venture up and running. The project launches on Wednesday 28 September at 4pm in the main school hall and parents are welcome to attend. Today, as I write we have a group of Year 11s out on their Duke of Edinburgh expedition and last night our school football season kicked-off with our U13s playing out a thrilling draw with Denzle being player of the match. Congratulations too go to Holly in Year 9, who is recently crowned European champion in trial biking. What a brilliant achievement, Holly!

What has struck me about Eskdale right from my first visit here before I was appointed was the energy of the pupils and the will from everyone involved to make this school the best it can be and that has been a feature of the new term. There is a real air of optimism here. Linked to that is our **Open Evening on Tuesday 27 September running from 4-6.30pm**. Some of you will have children in Year 5 or Year 6 and you are of course, most welcome to come into school that night. I'd also ask for your help in spreading the message to family and friends that we are hosting this event and everyone is invited. It will be an opportunity to get into the school and meet many of wonderful pupils and all our dedicated staff.

You as parents are crucial in supporting the education of your child and should you wish to contact the school there are two main email addresses:

For general enquiries it is: post@eskdale-school.co.uk

For pastoral issues it is: pastoral@eskdale-school.co.uk

The school contact phone number is: 01947 602856

Your contact will be responded to by the most appropriate person. For pastoral issues the key professional in your child's school life will usually be their form tutor and it is important for you to note that Mrs Scales and Mr Raw are now leading our new look pastoral team supported by Mrs Daley and Mrs Wilson. There are no individual year heads. For academic matters the individual Heads of Department will oversee the response. For your information they are:

English: Mrs Pegden

Maths: Mr Bell

Wider Science: Mrs Tindall

Humanities: Mrs Hodgson

Creatives: Mrs Parlby

Technology: Mr Rae

Our Senior Leadership Team is comprised of myself as the Head with Mr Dixon as Deputy Head and Mrs Bradley and Mrs Hurworth as Assistant Heads.

I hope this information allows parents to be clear on some of our structures. I will share with you any more developments as they happen, so you are clear on how our school is operating to support your child's education.

I will close by reflecting again on the positive start to our academic year here at Eskdale School, but it would be remiss of me not to comment on the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. We are closed on Monday 19 September as you know when her funeral takes place, and over the weekend and on Monday I hope you and your child will have the chance to view some of the proceedings and engage in a discussion about our longest reigning monarch. Queen for a remarkable seventy years, she is the only monarch that most Britons have known and whatever personal views are held, it is right to mark her death with dignity and respect.

I wish you all a peaceful weekend and thank you for your support of our school.

Best Wishes,



Mr PJ Nicholson

Head of School

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