

Friday 19/11/2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

On Sunday I attended the Remembrance Parade in Todmorden along with a group of our students and staff who laid a wreath at the Memorial Garden. A group of singers from the school attended to join in with singing the hymns and we paid our respects collectively as representatives of our school for those who gave their lives and who continue to give their lives in defence of our country. It was an honour to attend and I was very proud of our students on the day.

This week we had the absolute pleasure of welcoming the Mayor to Todmorden High School. Ten of our students entered the Festive Lights competition late last year and were supported by Mr Freeman in their Art lessons to design a light that would potentially be created and shown in the town centre as part of the Christmas lights display. The initiative was run by the council and one of our students was successful with her entry. Erica's Christmas light design was selected as the winner and will be displayed alongside several other lights in Todmorden town centre. The lights are being switched on this weekend, and Erica has been invited to push the button along with the other competition winners from across Todmorden. We are so proud of Erica, and all the other students who took part in the competition. They all received a glossy image of their design mocked up as it would have appeared once made. Many thanks to the Mayor for her visit, and I hope many of you can make it to the lights switch on this weekend.



I also spent some time on Thursday awarding prizes to our Pumpkin Carvers, who made a fantastic effort through our Pumpkin Carving competition. I received a wide array of pumpkins as part of this competition and was pleased to award 1st prize to Haydn in Year 7 for his James Bond themed pumpkin. We are currently running a Christmas Card competition in school, with designs due in by 3/12/21. The winning design will be made into our school Christmas Card for 2021 and sent out to all our friends in the wider community. Please do encourage your child to enter.

Today I took a small group of students out for a rewards dinner, the students were selected due to their hard work in gardening club, work in their subject areas and fantastic attitude to learning overall. The age of the students ranged from between 11-16. It was lovely to spend some time with our students and Mr Womack celebrating their achievements and success, those who have seen the garden in the summertime will know how beautiful the gardening team have it looking. Well done to all, and I look forward to my next rewards outing.

As the pandemic has dragged on, I know many of us have been concerned to do what we can to support young people's wellbeing. As well as giving advice and support in school, through lessons, assemblies and 1:1 sessions, we have been working with other agencies to look for effective and helpful online support. This link <https://www.mytutor.co.uk/blog/parents/educational-advice/teen-mental-health-a-guide-for-parents/> takes parents to a very helpful advice toolkit for dealing with children's wellbeing. We hope you find it useful. Should you have any further concerns about the wellbeing of your child/children, please do get in touch via the Learning Manager in the first instance. We are here to help.



Enabling individuals to unlock their unique potential

THS has recently switched to using buff paper for printing services. Our paper is 100% recycled.

On Thursday 25/11/21 there will be a Parents' Evening for year 11. This will be a virtual event run through SchoolCloud. Parents and carers of students in year 11 should now have received a letter about this with all the information. If you have not received this letter or are having issues logging on please contact your child's Learning Manager e.stansfield@todhigh.co.uk.



This week we have been engaging with Anti-Bullying week, the theme of which this year is 'One Kind Word'. Monday was Odd Socks Day to which we had a fantastic turn out, and students engaged in assemblies each day which centered upon being kind and showing kindness to each other. I am proud to share that we have joined the Anti-Bullying Alliance and will continue to work with students to ensure that bullying is not part of school life here at Todmorden High. You can find out more about Anti-Bullying week and the Anti-Bullying Alliance here <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week>.

Following internal investigation based on the honesty of some of our students, it has come to our attention that a small number of students have been buying 'vapes' locally. We would like you to know that we have taken this matter very seriously and contacted relevant authorities to prevent future illegal sales of these items to our students. Such items should not be in the possession of children and most certainly should not be brought into school; the relevant sanctions will be applied if they are.

Whilst we know that this issue only affects a minority of students, we would appreciate it if you could reinforce the message and speak to students about this issue. Vaping is illegal for children under the age of 18 and contains nicotine, which is highly addictive and may lead to students taking up smoking. Additionally, the long-term health effects of vaping is currently unknown.

There is a current craze for something called 'Squid Game'. Whilst the graphic style of this online game looks very simplistic and childlike, the content of the game has the potential to be very disturbing for even adult players, and particularly younger viewers. We would advise that parents and guardians routinely keep a close eye on what their child is accessing online and advise them AGAINST playing this game. It is the responsibility of parents to support their child/ren in making sensible choices with regard to what their child accesses, and there are many helpful apps that allow parents to keep track of online activity. A quick internet search will bring up a host of options to help you keep an eye on online activity. Please do make sure you know what your child is accessing and take note of age restrictions for apps and games; they are there to protect young people from online distress.

A reminder that we do still have a good stock of Lateral Flow Tests available in school should you wish to come and collect some please don't hesitate to contact our administrative team who can facilitate this.

A reminder that school will be closed on Friday 26th November for the replacement Jubilee holiday. Please make alternative arrangements for your child for that day. In the meantime if there is anything we can do to support please do let us know.

Yours Sincerely,

Gill Shirt
Headteacher