

Beths Blog

Week ending Friday 13 October 2017

On Sunday 8 October, Mrs Deane attended the Cricket Young Leaders 2017 presentations at Lord's Cricket Ground. Six of our students attended: Joshua Anderson, Jasper Herridge, Lucas Nathan, Richard Chin, Jake Pearson and Callan Lemon. As usual, the students were a credit to Beths and Mrs Deane only received great feedback about their conduct throughout.

Congratulations to Richard Chin who was the young person out of around 300 others who raised the most funds for the 'fundraising' part of the scheme.

Official photographs to follow.

YoungMinds

On Tuesday 10 October we marked World Mental Health Day 2017 asking students to think about their own mental health in a novel way whilst also selling donuts to raise money for YoungMinds (a mental health charity that provides support for young people and their carers). We are delighted to announce that we raised £118.72 for YoungMinds!

In order to get students thinking and talking about their own mental health they were asked, anonymously, to post into a 'Mental Health Post Box' either a hope, fear, reoccurring dream or mental health experience (eg what it's like to live with someone who has autism or depression, or perhaps to visit a relative with dementia). As the students 'posted' their entries they were asked to notice how they felt and the feedback received was that they felt 'good', 'relieved' or 'glad I've got it off my chest.'

It is hoped that this experiential learning will cement the idea that it's better to talk about our feelings than keep them bottled up.



Key Stage 4 Performance Table Figures

On Thursday 12 October, the DfE published the provision Exam Performance Tables information on the Government website.

The outcome of this is that Beths achieved a GCSE Progress 8 value of +0.64. This means that students, on average, achieve nearly ⅓rds of a grade above expectation. Given that expectations are already high, this is a fantastic result given that Chis & Sid and Bexley Grammar achieved +0.3 and +0.36 respectively.

Well done to the students, the staff for their hard work and the parents for their support.

Open Morning

Yesterday, we held our first Open Event of this academic year for Year 7 students hoping to join us in September 2018.

We welcomed many more families than we have ever done in the past – so many more than expected that we had to rely on students to, without warning, come out of lessons to help us with the tour guiding.

Most of the comments from those who visited were about our amazing student guides and the two students who spoke during the Head's presentation: Gwyn Bowen, our Head Boy and Lucas Hicks – a young man in 7B who has literally only been with us since the start of September.

On Tuesday we have our Open Evening, where we will be showcasing a number of new initiatives for our visitors which we hope they will find stimulating. We have our last Open Morning on Thursday 19 October where we hope for a similar turnout as today.

Operation Christmas Child (Samaritans' Purse)

This year the school will be involved in the Samaritans' Purse Christmas Shoebox Appeal. This is a campaign that thousands of schools, churches and other organisations from across the UK get involved with between September and November of each year. In fact, it is now the UK's largest children's Christmas appeal.



The idea is very simple – the students will wrap and pack shoeboxes with a range of gifts and bring them into school where we will act as a “collection point”. The charity will then come to school to collect the gift-filled boxes and send them overseas where local churches distribute them to children, on the basis of need alone. Each shoebox is an unconditional gift, given to children with nothing asked for, or expected in return; “no strings attached”.

All students will receive a leaflet which provides more information about the appeal and all the “does and don't” when packing the shoebox. Students can decide if they want to put together a box for a boy or girl and select the appropriate age group for the child.

This is a fantastic opportunity for Beths to be involved with as it fits perfectly with the values of the school. We can clearly display the values of **respect and community** by getting involved with this charity and we very much look forward to the many donations we hope to receive. The boys are very keen to get involved in this and I would like to express my thanks to the Year 9 team who have prepared and delivered the assemblies to inform students of this appeal. There are over 1,400 students on the school roll at Beths and we would be delighted if we could get as close to this figure as possible. Family members are encouraged to donate to the packing of the box and your son could then bring this into school for collection. You are also welcome to make a monetary donation along with your shoebox and if you are a UK tax payer please tick the box for Gift Aid.

House points will be awarded for every student who brings in a gift-filled box and prizes will be awarded to the forms who bring in the most in each year group.

We would like students and their families to work on this over the half-term break and bring them into school at **the very latest by Friday the 10 November**.

If you have any further questions or queries then please speak with either Ms Takeda or myself who will be delighted to help. My sincere thanks to all students and parents in advance for your support with this. This is our chance to make such a positive difference to the lives of less fortunate children this Christmas season. Please read the article below to get a feel for the impact your involvement could have on a child.

Mr McBeth, Head of Year 9

A Life Touched

Them bani is 11 years old. His mother and father passed away some years ago, so Them bani now lives with his eight brothers and sisters high up in the hills of rural Swaziland, near South Africa.

When *Operation Christmas Child* came to his village, Them bani and each of his brothers and sisters received a shoebox filled with presents. "I really enjoyed opening the box," said Them bani. "I've never received anything like this before."

Them bani's favourite gifts were his notebook, pens, and socks. "I love the notebook," he said. "I am going to write in it all the time."

An hour after the shoebox distribution, Them bani sat in the doorway of his home avidly drawing and writing in his new notebook. When asked how he felt about the gifts, he said, "I'm so happy, I'm tongue-tied!"

The gift that Them bani received was more than just a shoebox. It was the gift of education, and toys so he could be a child again. It was also a gift of love at Christmas, and the gift of hope for the future.

The hope is there because the same church that gave Them bani his shoebox has also been supported by Samaritan's Purse to care for him and his siblings – providing them with food, clothing and ongoing loving care.

That's the power of a shoebox gift – a gift that enabled an adult or child in the UK (who created it) and a local church in Swaziland (who distributed it) to touch the life of a child in need.

