

NEWSLETTER: Summer 2025

A Note From The Principal - Gill Mills

Thank you to all students, parents/carers and staff for their hard work this academic year. We look forward to welcoming you all back in September.



ATHLETICS

Wowzers! What an amazing athletics meeting we had on the evening of the 4th June! 20 students from Year 7 & 8 performed so well in various events. 10 of them have qualified for the semi final.

More great news - Ben did brilliantly at the North Yorkshire Schools County Championships, coming 2nd in both the 100 and 200m - Congratulations!



GOODBYE, MRS HARDY!

Mrs Hardy retires after 26 years at Vale of York Academy

This term, we say goodbye to one of our longest serving members of teaching staff after 26 years at Vale and 38 years of teaching.

Mrs Hardy has been instrumental in the development of the Academy, especially the pupil progress and the improvements in attainment which have been seen. Her presence around the school and good humour will be missed by staff and students alike.

She would like to say a few words to all the pupils, parents, governors, trust staff, support workers and school staff who she has taught, met and worked with over the last 26 years.

"Well I knew this day would come but now it is actually here I am not sure I am ready for life without Vale of York Academy. I arrived at Canon Lee School, as it was then, in September 1999, having previously taught in Selby, thinking I'll give this school 3 or 4 years then move on. It was a school going through big changes, with a new headteacher, new extensions being added to the building in preparation for the influx of new pupils coming in, as Queen Anne School was due to close the following year. It was a school that needed new teachers, new ideas and new pupils, and I am proud to say I was one of those new teachers who came to improve the Technology department. To this day I am still proud of my designs for the layout of the Food and Textiles rooms, the best in the city, in my opinion.

I have always loved teaching, and over the 38 years I still haven't met a student I didn't like and couldn't teach, although some have been a challenge at times. I have always felt respected and (if not liked by every child), appreciated and valued by the pupils and the parents at this school. Some of you are now parents, aunts or uncles of pupils I have taught more recently, hopefully no grandparents, I am leaving before that revelation. Imagine hearing 'you taught my grandad / grandma'! I have also loved teaching and working in such a great community as Clifton and Rawcliffe, it is a tight knit community where people support each other and the local schools, and I am proud to have been part of that community for so many years.

I am a Technology teacher, and believe the problem solving, design and creative and vocational subjects are just as important for pupils to learn life and work related skills as the more academic subjects. I have been lucky to teach GCSE's in Textiles, Food, Resistant Materials, Health and Social Care, Child Care, Art and Psychology over the years inspiring quite a few students to take these further into A Levels/ level 3 courses or future careers.

In more recent years, I have been lucky to be part of the school's Senior Leadership Team, driving up standards so our pupils are set up to take advantage of all the opportunities the wider world has to offer. I have seen the school's reputation steadily improve, our results improve dramatically and our pupils go on to do amazing things with confidence and resilience. I have been part of many inspections in the school's history and it is so pleasing that we have been regularly recognised as a very good school who work hard supporting

the development academically and personally of pupils at our school. I have seen the school move from York local education authority supervision to a Trust school as part of a group of schools working towards the goal of better life chances for all and core values of Kindness, Teamwork and Respect so important for future life and developing good citizens in an ever changing world.

I have worked with the best teachers, leaders, teaching assistants, governors and support staff over the years. The children who come to this school really do get the best of chances, with staff that go that extra mile every day to make sure pupils feel happy, successful and valued. The pupils have always been amazing, funny, caring, talented and on occasion surprising which has made my job such a pleasure and the reason I have been teaching so long and stayed much longer than my original plan.

Finally, what am I going to do now, you may ask. Well, I have travel plans, Japan being on my bucket list first, and I have hobbies which I have neglected for too long, friends I haven't seen across the country. I now have no excuse not to visit, and a home that needs a bit of TLC as it's been neglected in favour of this job for too long. I am excited for the future but I will miss teaching, the school, the staff, the pupils and the community.

Good wishes to everyone- Mrs Hardy signing off!"



MUSIC

Visit to Handley House - May 14th

We visited Handley House Care Home for the afternoon on the 14th of May and enjoyed joining in with their music session led by Musical Connections. It had a VE Day theme and we sang songs like 'It's a Long Way to Tipperary' and 'We'll Meet Again'. We participated in some dances too! Our students were amazing and embraced the event with enthusiasm. Handley House has invited us back so we can hopefully manage another visit soon.

Summer Showcase Concert - June 25th

This was a successful evening which consisted of an Art exhibition based on our Y11 GCSE work, and a summer concert. Refreshments were served and the audience enjoyed a variety of musical performances, culminating in the Steel City Roses and a Beatles singalong. Thank you to all who took part and all who supported.

Dear Evan Hansen - June 26th

It was a warm evening at the Grand Opera House in York but 30 of our students thoroughly enjoyed their visit to watch this incredible show. The quality of the performance was exceptional and we all really enjoyed the show. It was funny and moving in equal measure, and definitely one worth seeing if you get the chance.

Y6 Transition Pizza Evening - July 3rd

Thank you to our musicians for giving up their evening to perform for the Y6 students and their families at this warm, sunny and very enjoyable event.

Summer Big Sing - July 4th

We welcomed around 20 elderly residents from our local community into school along with 25 Y5 students from Burton Green School for an hour of intergenerational songs and activities. It was a wonderful atmosphere in the Hall, full of smiles and laughter, and everybody mixed very well led by Musical Connections staff Abby and Charlotte. We look forward to welcoming them all back for the Christmas Big Sing in December.

MUSIC TUITION MESSAGE

We now have over 70 students receiving singing/instrumental lessons in school each week. Please contact Mrs Brady directly with any requests or queries at p.brady@voy.hlt.academy

York Youth Festival - July 23rd

This is taking place on Weds 23rd July in Rowntree Park between 2-5pm. It is aimed at 11-18 year olds and our Y10 band 'The Steel City Roses' have been selected to perform. Click the link for more info:
<https://www.york.gov.uk/news/article/1714/new-youth-festival-coming-to-york-this-summer>

Musical Events over the summer

Rockgod Academy -

<https://rockgodacademy.com/home/>

Tanghall Smart - <https://www.tanghallsmart.com/>

Accessible Arts and Media IMPS summer clubs -

<https://www.aamedia.org.uk/our-projects/imps/show/6>

York's best summer holidays clubs and camps - <https://little-vikings.co.uk/york-best-holiday-club-camp/>



MUSIC EXAM NEWS

Congratulations to Sam (Y7) who passed his Grade 2 piano exam with 'Merit'. A great achievement - Well done!

PROM 2025

What an amazing evening to celebrate the end of GCSEs, and to say 'Goodbye' to VOYA! The Year 11s met at Clifford's Tower on a warm and humid evening. There were some wonderful 'taxis' - and

one car that shook the tower itself with its loud exhaust!

After lots of mingling, the group magically managed to arrange themselves for a perfect photo, with Clifford's Tower smiling down on them - the smartest group to ever adorn the hill! The boys looked immaculate - think red carpet 'Cruise' - and the girls shimmered and shone in a rainbow of beautiful dresses!

At 7.30, the group crossed the road to the Hilton for their supper, held in their own private dining room. And then the awards - with MC Belyeu on the mic! Highlight awards were - 'Most likely to win a BAFTA' - with Connor as its popular and well-deserved winner. James was the winner of the 'Future Primeminister' (definitely!) and Cameron was 'Most likely to headline at Glastonbury'.

Perfect winners of Prom King and Queen 2025 were George and Ava, who then got the dancing started. And so we say a sad 'Goodbye' to our wonderful Year 11s, and wish them all the luck and happiness in the world for the future!

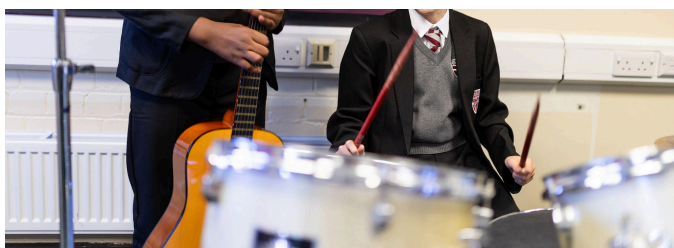
RAWCLIFFE CARNIVAL

On Saturday 10th May the sun shone, and lots of our pupils attended the amazing Rawcliffe Carnival. There were fantastic performances from some of our pupils. Toby delighted the audience with his guitar and singing. And our Year 10 band - James (guitar and vocals), Aemon (guitar), Maison (Bass) and Theo (drums) were energetic and terrific.

The Year 9 band also played ; Josie & Eva (vocals), Alex (keyboard), Robyn (Bass), Henry (drums), Nathaniel (guitar) and Dexter (lead guitar).

It was a wonderful event and our students did a fabulous job entertaining the very large crowd gathered at the Rec.

We're already looking forward to next year!



SPORTS DAY 2025

A note from Mr Rampling

'Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.' We won the championship yesterday on Sports Day!



THE STEEL CITY ROSES

The Steel City Roses... are the Year 10 (about to be Year 11) band ! They have played at numerous events at Vale of York - but are now spreading

their wings, and playing around York! Their first gigs were at the Fulford Working Men's club, and the Rawcliffe Carnival - and both were a great success. In the summer holidays, they will be playing in Rowntrees Park (on Wednesday 23rd July at 2-5pm). Do pop over and support them - they are pretty fab - think the new (and rather more genteel) 'Oasis' !



TRANSITION DAY - YORK RIPON AND ST JOHN

On Thursday 11th July, 10 students from Year 7 joined with a group from Burton Green School at York Ripon and St John, for a day of fun activities which were designed to help the groups get to know each other, ready for next year.

We had a wonderful tour of the campus, and then took part in a timed interactive quiz - which team could make the tallest shoe pile, design a paper aeroplane which would fly furthest, solve some riddles, and follow various instructions to the clock. After a delicious lunch of campus-cooked pizzas and cookies, we set about designing and making graduation mortar boards.

The pupils had a great day; thank you to Mr Orr for organising!

YORK SCHOOLS CHORAL FESTIVAL

26 students from Years 7, 8 and 9 had a wonderful day at University of York, performing in the York Schools Choral festival and taking part in amazing workshops between rehearsals !

The day started off with a speedy rehearsal in the Jack Lyons Concert Hall - 'Sweet Child of Mine'! Our group of singers (led by our great Year 9 band - Dexter, Robyn, Henry, Alex and Nat) - rocked the York Campus!

We then took part in a meditative 'Gamelan' gong workshop. Gamelan - from Indonesia - very rhythmical and calming, was a great way to relax. In contrast, our next workshop was a Japanese Taiko drumming class! 28 drummers, giving it their all; this style of drumming demands the musicians to jump and shout! This was great fun, and we all got rid of a bit of energy!

After lunch, The Vale students did us proud with a wonderful performance - along with 6 other schools. Our students opened the Festival Concert,

and their version of 'Sweet Child' earned them a huge applause. We listened to performances from other schools, as well as 3 'inspirational soloists' - young singers, who are clearly on the brink of success ! The concert ended with all the schools coming together, singing 'Proud' - terrific ! And everyone who performed should have felt very proud . It was a great day, enjoyed by all.

Thank you, Mrs Brady for making this possible, and getting the singers ready with their fantastic song.