

15.12.2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

It gives me great pleasure to write to you at the end of a busy term at Outwood Academy Hemsworth. Students will come home today ready for a well-earned break and, at the end of the Autumn term, I wanted to share just some of the many achievements and highlights from the last 14 weeks. As Acting Head of School, I feel privileged to lead the academy, working with staff and students who want the very best for our community. Our students have attended a number of local events this term, including the Remembrance Event at the Hemsworth Cenotaph on Friday 11 November. This week we welcomed 40 members of the community into the academy for a Pensioners' Christmas lunch where students and staff served our guests a fabulous Christmas dinner.

This week all students have been issued with their Praising Stars report, which allows you to see the progress of your child, including effort grades, attendance, behaviour and praises. During the Autumn term over 31,000 praise events have been logged by staff for students in Key Stages 3, 4 and in Post 16. This is a phenomenal achievement and reflects how hard students are working in each lesson. This week we celebrated with Year 11 students as they received their mock exam results, alongside a Praising Stars assembly when 82 students from the year group accepted certificates for achieving all E1s and E2s in their reports. I look forward to more celebrations at the Y7-10 Praising Stars assemblies in January 2023.

In our recent Ofsted report, we were proud that inspectors found *'in lessons, pupils routinely behave well and work hard. This is partly because pupils are well taught. It is also because teachers have very clear expectations.'* As Senior Leaders and Heads of Department walk around the academy, we see good engagement in lessons with students who show a genuine enthusiasm and desire to be their best. We have also had an excellent uptake for enrichments, which are activities that take place between 2.30-3.30pm. A particular highlight for me was seeing students perform at 'Hemsworth's Got Talent Show' last week and I very much enjoyed being part of the judging panel. I was amazed by the confidence, camaraderie and passion for the Creative Arts as students took to the stage. It was lovely to meet so many parents, carers and family members supporting this event. If you would like to know more about our enrichment activities please see the 'Enrichment Express' link [here](#).

At Outwood Academy Hemsworth, we are proud to have the 'Carnegie Gold Award' for our work on Mental Health and Wellbeing. As part of our wellbeing strategy, the school has been chosen to work with 'YoungMinds' on a new project to improve mental health and wellbeing support across England and Wales. As one of only ten secondary schools selected, this is a unique opportunity to work closely with this national charity. To support our work, please can I ask you to complete the following short survey, if you have not already had a chance to do so. It will only take about 10 minutes, is voluntary and you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to. However, by completing the survey it gives you the opportunity to get your voice heard, and helps us to gain a more complete picture of the school community and mental health. [Parent/carer survey](#) I would also like to share this wellbeing resource with lots of ideas for looking after ourselves and each other during the Christmas season [Seasonal self care survival kit](#).

This academic year Outwood Academy Hemsworth is working in collaboration with the 'Leeds United Foundation' as part of their School-Hub education model. The focus of our collaboration is to use coaching to motivate and engage students, as well as provide a unique link between sport and education. Already, our students have had opportunities to win tickets for Premier League games; attend a Student Voice 'Sustainability and Climate Change' Conference hosted at Elland Road; as well as hear messages of support from players as part of our tutor time curriculum on topics such as 'Black Lives Matter'; diversity and tackling racism and derogatory language. I am pleased to announce that in early January Leeds United will be launching a football coaching session for girls at Outwood Academy Hemsworth. This club will run on a Tuesday night, leading to tournaments and workshops, as well as launching a community action project with students volunteering in the local area.

Furthermore, the school has joined forces with 'United Against Bullying', an alliance forum that allows students to provide their views, ideas and recommendations for this important issue. The programme has a strong focus on equality and diversity which helps us to build on the excellent work already established in the academy by Mental Wellbeing Champions. Our Student Tutor Representatives have already completed a questionnaire and will now act as ambassadors for the full roll-out of student-voice activities in the new year. I met today with our Student Voice Prime Minister and the Student Deputies to discuss the next steps for this key aspect of our curriculum.

You will have already read that the Trust has taken the decision to update our uniform policy and this information was sent to parents/carers via text message and can also be found on our website <https://www.hemsworth.outwood.com/posts/5051>. The academy expects students to dress smartly, have high standards of uniform and take a sense of pride in their appearance. However, in a time of increasing financial pressure we have looked at ways in which we may be able to support parents and carers. Should you need to purchase new items of uniform over the holiday, I would ask that you read this information carefully to support our students in meeting uniform expectations for school.

Finally, to allow parents and carers to follow the good news stories within the academy I would like to draw your attention to our Academy website and two social media platforms. Our Academy website [www.https://www.hemsworth.outwood.com](https://www.hemsworth.outwood.com) contains all the up-to-date news on the academy including term dates, letters to parents/carers, curriculum information and enrichment activities. If you would like to follow us via social media visit Twitter @OAHemsworth or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/OutwoodAcademyHemsworth>

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and to wish each one of you a very merry Christmas. Students return to the academy for the Spring term on Tuesday 3 January 2023 and I look forward to seeing each one of them back safely at the start of the new year.



Outwood Academy Hemsworth Student Voice reps at Elland Road, Leeds for the 'OGAT Sustainability and Climate Change Conference' 13 December 2022.

David Owens, Bobby Cook, Lucy Gamble, Emily Gamble and Alisha Attwood

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suzie Day', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Mrs Suzie Day
Acting Head of School