



WOODHOUSE GROVE SCHOOL

woodhousegrove.co.uk

Dear Parents

I write to you after another action-packed, but immensely rewarding, Term. As we look forward to Easter, hopefully bathed in spectacular spring sunshine, it is also an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate all that has been achieved over the past three months or so.

Woodhouse Grove's overarching aim is to provide an excellent all-round education with a strong academic core to allow every child to achieve their own personal bests. The School is ambitious for all its young people, all of whom are encouraged and challenged to make the very most of their talents and the huge opportunities available. As I record every Term, Woodhouse Grove is a School of breadth and opportunity, much of which is regularly showcased in our fortnightly editions of Newsflash ([Link](#)) and I am delighted that a very large number of our pupils have continued to participate in such a rich and varied programme of co-curricular activities. Whilst by no means exhaustive, here are some of the highlights:

- The School had its most successful Netball season in its history, with both our U16 and U19 netballers qualifying for the National Netball Finals. This is an amazing achievement and the teams were placed 9th and 13th respectively in the country. Both teams also reached the semi-final of the National Netball Cup, along with our U14s, highlighting the strength of our School in this sport across all age groups. The season ended with outstanding wins for our 1st and 2nd VII teams at the Queen Margaret's Invitational tournament. We are so proud of the dedication shown by all our pupils and coaching staff.
- Our Rugby Sevens teams, and particularly our U16 and U12 squads, have enjoyed a variety of successes throughout a busy programme of tournaments and festivals.
- Our Cross-Country runners enjoyed continued success, with five students competing for West Yorkshire in the English Schools' National Finals in Nottingham.
- We applaud some individual sporting excellence this Term with a number of students selected and playing for elite pathway programmes such as; Leeds Rhinos Rugby, Leeds Rhinos Netball, Manchester United and Yorkshire Academy Rugby and at National level; England Rugby U18 and U17, England Football U15 and Wales Netball U17.
- Our fencers continue to grow, both in terms of numbers and confidence. A number of Year 7 students made their fencing debut in the Northern Youth Challenge series this Term, and our more experienced fencers in other year groups, made the podium.
- The production of *School of Rock* was incredible with a large cast showcasing their talent to packed audiences on both nights. Congratulations to the actors and the backstage crew and staff on a very uplifting, energetic and dynamic production.
- Our Grove Awards for Years 7 to 9 continue to go from strength to strength with more than 30 students receiving certificates and badges already this Academic Year.

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I am Grovian.



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- Years 9 to 11 highlighted our academic ability in the recent UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge with 6 Gold certificates awarded. A further 40 students were awarded Silver or Bronze certificates.
- We are very proud of our Enterprise Group who have reached the final stages of the LEAP Business Competition and will attend the Awards Ceremony in April. The judges were impressed with their business plan and learning journey as they created, produced and marketed their dog treats business.

Yesterday evening, in a fitting end to another busy and rewarding Term, we were treated to a splendid Easter Charity Concert. Those who attended the concert were privileged to be in the presence of true greatness; amongst our number was one of the most important and influential figures in the School's twentieth century history. It was with a real sense of pride, affection and heartfelt thanks that The Grove Theatre was formally renamed 'The McCarthy Theatre.'

David McCarthy first came to The Grove as a student teacher in 1953, having recently graduated in English and Theology from Downing College, Cambridge, after attending Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wakefield. David joined the School staff in 1954 as a member of the English Department. He served the School in a far greater number of ways than any other member of staff: coach of every cricket and rugby team; regular umpire; tireless referee, and later Secretary, Selector and Chairman of Yorkshire 16 Group Rugby; Tour Manager of the 1991 Canadian Rugby Tour; Convenor of Old Grovian teams; Assistant Secretary of the Old Grovians; Editor of the Grovian magazine; House Tutor in three different Houses; Housemaster of Vinter; Teacher of English, Latin, Music, Religious Studies, General Studies, and latterly Linguistics; Chapel organist; Head of English; Director of Music; and Second Master (Deputy Head). In his heyday, there are some people, me included, who thought that he could probably carry out all of these roles simultaneously! It was an absolute delight to welcome David and his wife, Liz, back to The Grove; the School he served with distinction for his entire working life.

As I have frequently recorded in Open Day speeches and Prize Day addresses, an education which is not based upon principle, and a core set of values, is almost worthless. That is why at Woodhouse Grove we place so much emphasis on our Grovian Values. When our young people first walk through our doors they become Grovians for life. Throughout their life, a Grovian is expected to be 'Kind and Generous.' In a School context, how these words become action is the challenge of our Charity Committee, the work of which is led by students and supported by Mr Lambert, Rev Drost and Mrs Nulty.

Each year, the School looks to support causes that are a mix of Local, National and International projects, chosen by the Committee and informed by whole-School student surveys. This year, we are supporting the *North Bradford Foodbank*, *Friends of Migrants*, *EduKid* and *Candlelighters*. Fundraising is through various initiatives, including; three non-uniform days, cake bake sales, donated food and clothing etc.

As well as raising funds, it is also about raising a greater awareness of present issues. With this in mind, the current crises in Turkey and Syria have touched many students, inciting requests for the School to respond. Money raised from today's non-uniform day will go towards helping those directly affected by the disaster. Thank you to all members of the School community for giving our young people the resources, time and means to support the School's various charitable and fundraising efforts.

For our Year 11 and Year 13 age groups, examination preparation, in addition to some much needed rest, is the priority for the Easter break. All students have been given extensive advice with regard to their revision work over the holiday period. Most of all, they must ensure that quality time is given to their academic work which, as much educational research proves, should ideally be undertaken in a good working environment combined with plenty of sleep and physical exercise. The last few months of the Academic Year are, inevitably, challenging, not to say, stressful – but we want every pupil at The Grove to receive their results in the summer

without any regrets and knowing that they have given of their best. It is important therefore, that all those facing examinations next Term make the very most of the forthcoming opportunity to organise and refresh, to review and to understand, and to commit to memory. The precise details of the arrangements for Examination Leave in Years 11 and 13 will reach you in due course under separate cover.

Always an exciting area of work is the School's Capital Projects Programme, which we have been able to embark on thanks to the generous support of our parent charity, the Methodist Independent Schools Trust (MIST). The various schemes now appear to be finally gaining some momentum following a number of delays due to the pandemic and various ensuing planning issues. The new modular changing facility is now in use and, in the final week of Term, work commenced on the construction of a new Sixth Form Facility to enhance and compliment the impressive accommodation already enjoyed by our Year 12 and 13 students. This new, state-of-the-art facility will have seminar rooms suitable for Sixth Form teaching and lectures and career talks delivered by our ever-growing number of Grove Business Partners. There will be increased space for individual and collaborative working and integrated technology for the live streaming of topical issues – and, of course, the now ubiquitous Zoom calls! Elements of the space will have a much more corporate, workplace, feel. It is hoped that this new facility will become full operational by the end of February 2024. As recorded in my letter to parents back in December, the installation of a cover over the existing Bolt Netball / Tennis Courts adjacent to the Grainge 3G pitch will begin following the conclusion of the summer public examinations series.

I would, of course, like to reiterate my thanks for your continued forbearance and patience in relation to the Flood Alleviation works being carried out on the School site and its environs. We anticipate work on the School campus finishing very soon; however, I am afraid that disruption to the public highways in and around Apperley Bridge will continue for the foreseeable future.

I am delighted that Ellie Kildunne has accepted the School's invitation to be this year's Guest of Honour at Prize Day, which will be held on the morning of Saturday 1st July for prize winners and students in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 13. As I am sure many of you will be aware, Ellie is an Old Grovian and an established and prominent international rugby player, who scored the first try in the unbelievably exciting and memorable Rugby World Cup Final match against New Zealand in October of last year.

The Prize Giving ceremony will then be followed by our whole School Sports Day in the afternoon. More detailed information on these events will be communicated next Term. In addition to which, our Year 13 Leavers' Weekend programme will be released shortly, which culminates in our Old Grovian Family Day and Twenty20 cricket match on Sunday 2nd July from 2pm; which all Grove families are welcome to attend.

We look forward to welcoming all students back for the beginning of the Summer Term on Monday 24th April, with boarders returning on Sunday 23rd April.

Sarah and I wish you all a very happy and relaxing Easter.

With all my best wishes,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'James Lockwood'.

James Lockwood MA
Headmaster