



NCS Newsletter

Friday 1st December 2023

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Headmaster's Message



Earlier this term a party of North Cestrians were fortunate to visit Verona in Italy. Culturally rich (a UNESCO World heritage Site) our focus was on the links with Romeo and Juliet. But Verona's other great claim – and to Italians, the greatest – is that it was Verona where Alighieri Dante, in exile from Florence, wrote much of his most famous work, 'The Divine Comedy'. The story concerns itself with the journey of the human soul after death. A particularly inspiring line is found in Canto 26: "You were not made to live like brutes, but to pursue virtue and knowledge". These words – 700 years old – ring true today as ever.

One of the Character Traits that we promote is 'sophistication', which itself implies wisdom. We owe it to our youngsters to expose them to enriching life experiences, knowledge of the ages and the best of art and culture. Earlier in the week Mr Bell met with some parents to discuss how we can better deliver and communicate our Character and Cultural Capital programme. One idea was to put this more 'front and central' on our website. So with some new navigation on our website, we give details of how we develop Character Education at North Cestrian: follow the links Character->Character Development and click on the blue boxes to show how your child's character is developed and build their Character benchmark, or Character->Cultural Capital to see how cultural capital is forged in subject areas.

December brings a flurry of activity:

- Mon 4th December – Chester Zoo visit (Adaptions Module)
- Thu 7th December – Musical Christmas Concert 7-8pm
 - A wide range of musical talent and genres on offer
- **Sat 9th December 10.00-12.00 - Christmas Tea**
 - **Join families together in the Vanstone Hall for a fun Christmas Tea**
 - **£10 minimum donation buys you bottomless tea/coffee/hot chocolate, cakes and other treats, raffles, games, speaker, Christmas Movie Tables**
 - **All proceeds to school charity ACEF**
- Tue 12th December – Year 11 Parents' Evening – on line.
- Wed 13th Dec – Christmas Carol Service, St Margaret's Church. 1900-2000
 - This really kicks off the Christmas Spirit feeling. Traditional carols and bible readings, staff and pupil choirs, accompanied by musicians from the school band and orchestra.
 - PTFA mulled wine and mince pies – money donations gladly received on the night
- Fri 15th December – Own Clothes day, Pupil Christmas Lunch
 - Traditional Christmas Lunch on offer for pupils at lunch time.
 - Own Clothes Day - £2.00 paid via Parentmail. Proceeds to school charity ACEF and PTFA
 - Grand PTFA raffle – first prize – new Apple iPad. Tickets 5 for £5 or 3 for £3 - payment via Parentmail. Proceeds to PTFA
- Mon 18th December – Y8 Outdoor Activities trip to Wales
- Thu 21st Dec – End of term – 1200
 - Normal lessons before break, followed by Honours Assembly.
 - Good time to take home and wash those PE kits!

- **Mon 8th January 2024 – start of Spring Term**

DEPUTY REFLECTIONS



Every year we ask former students to return to our school. To the place where they were once little, not yet confident, unsure of if and how they would be successful. We want to know how they got to where they are today? What advice can they give to younger Cestrians... to follow in their footsteps... to stand on the shoulders of these giants. Once a Cestrian, always a Cestrian! Only together!



1 - Henry C - NCS Alumni

"Despite numerous heartfelt attempts by NCS staff, I became lazy, complacent, and I wasted my potential. I would have fared far, far, worse without the dedication and perseverance of wonderful people like Dr. Askey."

Henry C, graduated North Cestrian 2015, Salford University an MSc in Parasitology, works at a Manchester-based molecular diagnostics laboratory.

At this job I've been involved in development of diagnostic tests for multiple different kinds of cancer, and Parkinson's disease. I've volunteered to be trained in many different technologies and techniques outside of what I need day to day, and now use PCR, dPCR and several types of genetic sequencing regularly! I have recently led studies with my own team, spanning months in time and with numerous, varied complications and implications.

Henry's Tips to get the most out of NCS:

How lucky I was then, that the school and a few key individuals in particular, Mr Bell and Mr Bergin amongst them, organised so much support with my extra-curricular opportunities, school trips, and education. Suddenly, I found that North Cestrian had helped me to become a rounded character, and my ability to sell myself in these ways beyond my grades, opened the way to successful applications and interviews. I received an unconditional offer to the course of my dreams at Salford University for a degree in Biology.

The NCS Character Traits guiding my rich fulfilling life

So many of the traits culminated in a Year 11 trip to Northern and Central India. We spent 10 days there, seeing awesome sights, meeting wonderful people and learning about just about anything we could! It was a joint Geography, History, and R.E trip, and as someone doing all three of those at GCSE, it was an incredible opportunity indeed. I ended up using what I'd learned on the trip in every one of the relevant exams, and met or exceeded my predicted grade in all three subjects. While there, we heard so many stories that I recall to this day, but one of the very best things we did out there was the charity work with a small orphanage on behalf of the school.

What advice would you give to a Y7, Y9 and a Y11?

To a Year 7 – I would say approach every lesson with an open mind – you'll find out about amazing things you didn't know existed pretty much every week, if you keep your eyes and ears open

To a Year 9 – whatever choices you make for your options – there is no such thing as a right or wrong choice, do not underestimate the importance of your passion for a subject when deciding to study it further or not. Even if you're not as good at it as you'd like, knowledge can be taught and skills can be practised – NCS will give you all the help you need and more if you just go for it!

To a Year 11 – you have the chance to get good grades, sure, but you have the chance here to develop the character, the experiences, the leadership, and studying strategies which will form the basis of you getting through whatever you choose next! BTECs, Vocational Courses, A-Levels, Diplomas, the

workplace, Degrees – whatever it is, if you get into good habits now, you're getting yourself ahead of the game.

See if you are on the [character news](#)

Check out the latest [character development opportunities](#) or continue to build your [character benchmark certificate](#).

[You can Nominate a Pupil for their Character Development here.](#)

Pique your interest for the [cultural capital](#) and [send in your reflections](#)

ACADEMIC NEWS



Sleep your way to better grades!

6 SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN WAYS TO HELP YOU FALL ASLEEP

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

- **REGULAR BED TIMES / WAKE TIMES**
Keeps your body clock consistent and helps you avoid distractions.
Bedtime
- **1 Hr EXERCISE FOR AN HOUR A DAY**
Exercise tires you out, increases the blood flow in your arteries and raises your body temperature.
Bedtime -2 Hrs
- **TURN DOWN BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR PHONE**
The sleep hormone melatonin gets released when it is dark. The bright light on your phone stops this happening.
Bedtime -2 Hrs
- **EAT A TURKEY AND CHEESE SANDWICH**
Turkey, cheese and bread all contain Tryptophan, which helps you fall asleep; it's the perfect sleepy sandwich.
Bedtime -90 min.
- **DRINK CHERRY JUICE**
Cherries are natural source of the sleep hormone melatonin. Cherry juice drinkers fall asleep quicker and for longer.
Bedtime -1 Hr
- **TAKE A HALF HOUR HOT BATH**
Your body temperature drops when you sleep. You can prompt this sleepy state by stepping out of a hot bath.
Bedtime -45 min.

2 - Ways to fall asleep



3 - Common sleep mistakes

Thanks again to our Cognitive Science Network Partners InnerDrive for this week's academic gems of wisdom relating to our Attitude to Learning development area - Focus.

Sleep is the key to success in more ways than you would think and there are [many misconceptions](#) surrounding it. Research has consistently shown a positive relationship between sleep and academic achievement. The impact of sleep on grade improvement can be attributed to the role it plays in learning, memory, and other cognitive functions such as behaviour, emotion, and stress control.

Sleep and memory

The cycles of sleep allow neurons in the brain to recover so that they can coordinate with each other. When students are sleep deprived, their neurons malfunction, which means that their cognitive functions cannot work properly.

A wide range of research, including research on sleep cycles, has shown that sleep plays a vital role in memory. It appears that [combining sleep with spaced revision](#) (a strategy which involves spreading out study sessions over a longer period of time ahead of an exam) can maximise this relationship.

Sleep and attention (Attitude to Learning - Focus)

Attention is the first step to success, as it allows students to tune out any irrelevant information and focus on what they are learning about. When they concentrate on new learning material, they can

process it in [working memory](#) and eventually memorise it. But if they can't pay attention in class due to lack of sleep, then it is pretty much guaranteed that they won't remember the information as they didn't engage with it in the first place.

How sleep impacts emotions

Managing emotions is already a tricky task for students as their prefrontal cortex is still in development, and does not fully develop until they are 25 years old. This part of the brain plays a key role in emotional regulation and cognitive functioning. However, when students do not get enough sleep, this hinders their prefrontal cortex development and makes it even harder for them to control their emotions.

[Recent research](#) has demonstrated that lack of sleep leads to deficits in emotional processing. This explains why adolescents with poor sleep habits are more at risk for the development of anxiety, mood disorders, and behavioural issues.

This is of course about student well-being, but also more: when students are in a bad mood, their ability to acquire and retain new information is reduced, making it harder for them to learn. Therefore, sleep ensures that students are in the best frame of mind to achieve.

Sleep and stress

On the note of well-being, students often find it difficult to manage their stress levels, especially during exam season. Thankfully, sleep is a simple and effective way to reduce this stress.

[Research in sleep deprivation](#) shows a strong relationship between a lack of sleep and elevated stress levels in students. The hormone cortisol is associated with stress and increases alertness. A poor sleeping schedule can make someone's levels of cortisol rise at times when they are supposed to be low, which may cause students to be hypervigilant at times when they should be relaxed.

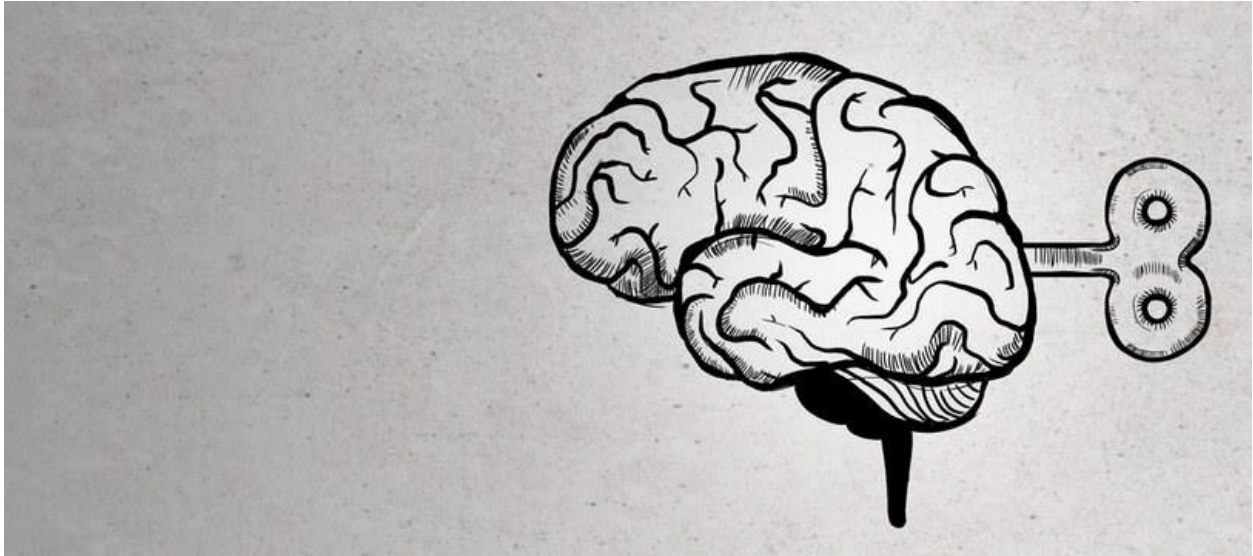
[But stress isn't always a bad thing](#) – in small amounts, it helps students stay engaged and keep complacency at bay. And unfortunately, sleep deprivation doesn't just send cortisol levels up when they should be low – it also does the contrary, which isn't as good as it sounds.

Studies have also shown that stress reduces sleep quality, creating a vicious cycle that's hard to escape. When students reduce their stress levels they can have better sleep, and good quality sleep helps to reduce their stress, making a consistent and positive sleep schedule all the more important.

Find out more about the 9 common Sleep Mistakes [here](#)

Struggling to get to sleep? [Try these](#)

PSYCHOLOGY NEWS



The openness of talking to strangers – and the intimate stories they share

Catherine Carr is a reporter who describes a distinct memory of being in the back seat of the family car on a long journey, looking at all the other cars full of people and thinking, “Where on earth are they all going and why?” As her eyes went funny trying to keep up with the traffic flicking past, it blew her mind to imagine everyone as the main character in the dramas of their own lives, with a busy morning behind them and a plan for the afternoon ahead. She says, “It’s a thought which has never really left me.” Find out more interesting stories about her interactions with strangers and the stories they tell at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2023/nov/12/i-ask-strangers-where-they-are-going-and-their-answers-are-filled-with-surprising-openness> or listen to the podcast, produced by Loftus Media, at whereareyougoing.co.uk



4 - Catherine Carr

Magicians are less prone to mental disorders than other artists, research finds...



An Aberystwyth University study shows a creative group with lower scores on psychotic traits than the general population

Creative types – musicians, painters, writers – are often regarded as a tormented and difficult bunch but a study has revealed that at least one subsection of the artistic community may have grasped the trick of staying well balanced. A study of magicians around the world, led by Aberystwyth University's psychology department, suggests that illusionists may be less prone to mental health difficulties than other creatives and the general population. The research, published this month in the journal BJPsych

Open, measured psychopathological traits of almost 200 magicians and compared the results with data from other artistic groups and the general population. It concluded that magicians scored significantly lower than other types of creatives and “normal” folk. Despite their job involving the illusion of delving into mystery, magicians were less likely to have unusual experiences such as hallucinations or cognitive disorganisation, the study found.

Find out more at [CLICK HERE](#)

*****PSYCHOLOGY STAR PUPILS*****

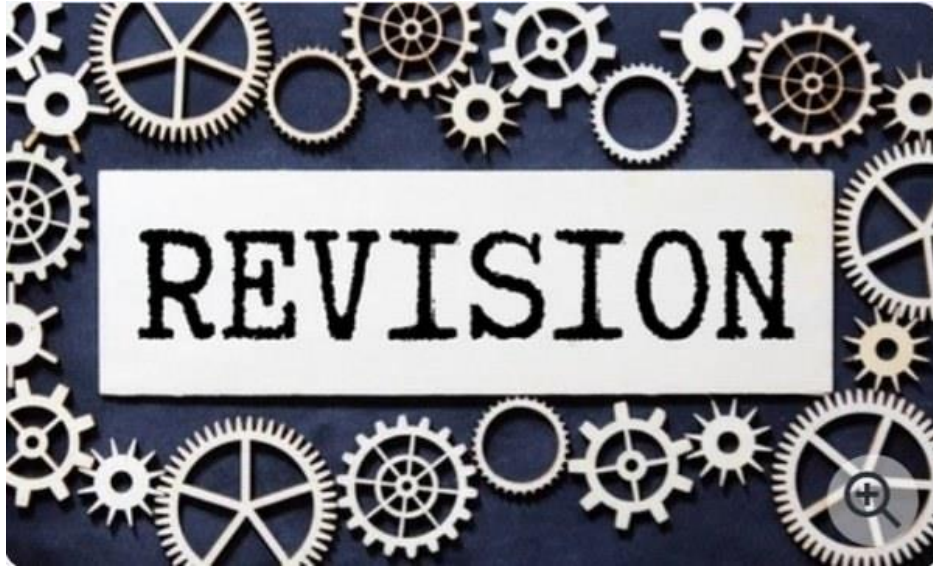


These pupils have made an excellent effort in Psychology at North Cestrian over the past term.

Year 10 Praise O - For great focus in lessons and asking some great questions.

Year 11 Ashaar M - For ongoing focus in lessons and commitment to revision outside of lessons.

GCSE Psychology Revision Sessions:



WEDNESDAY ANY Week from 15:30-16:15 with SFe U12

THURSDAY ANY Week (Week 2) from 15:30-16:15 with LMc U10

Careers Education - Manchester University



On Wednesday a good number of our pupils visited a careers fair held at Manchester University, showcasing the vast range of career opportunities within the NHS. The range of options was impressive: from research in biochemistry, to mental health support, to midwifery, to orthopaedics, it was educational to see the infrastructure behind the nursing and medical interventions. The various stands were 'hands on' with children making use of ultrasound devices, testing sample in agar, experiencing plaster casts, and using virtual reality to train in laboratory work. Pupils were a credit to the school, were engaged the activities and took interest in the speakers. Big thank you to Mr Gallamore and Mrs Iqbal for helping to organise the day.



5 - Careers



6 - Careers



7 - Careers



8 - Careers

YEAR 11 PARENTS CONSULTATION EVENING - NOW OPEN FOR BOOKINGS

Please contact Mrs Williams if you are experiencing any technical issues accessing School Cloud on s.williams@northcestrian.co.uk

NETBALL NEWS

The Year 9 Girls team produced excellent performances in their two recent matches against Sale High.

MVP Layla A. For an outstanding performance as both Captain and as a player. She showed excellent attacking skills and was a constant source of encouragement to the rest of the team. **Won 14-4 !!**

MVP Sienna W. In an exciting, skillful and closely fought game Sienna W put in an excellent performance as GA and was particularly impressive in the accuracy of her shooting. Lost 8-10



9 - Y9 Team

Other Sports News....Cross Country



10 - Cross Country training

The first training session for Cross Country took place yesterday after school. Wonderful to see the enthusiasm of the runners who showed great Cestrian resilience in turning up, despite the cold weather. The second training session will take place next Thursday, after school at the school fields.

Christmas Quiz

 Literacy

Book Poster
Christmas
QUIZ

▶ Get a form from and return to LH4

Answer the ten questions!

Make sure you put your full name and form on!

Return by Fri 15th December

You will get a reward stamp just for entering!

You could win a giant bar of chocolate, a free book and a book voucher!

Wood Street Mission Christmas





Make Christmas special

for local children by donating brand new toys and gifts



Spread the word...
#WoodStreetXmas

Registered Charity No 1078337

11 - Woods Street Mission

Every child deserves a magical Christmas!

Christmas Appeal 



We really need your help to give local children from struggling families a happy and memorable Christmas.

Families across Manchester and Salford will come to Wood Street Mission to choose gifts for their children from the selection we are donated by our supporters.

We will be accepting Christmas donations until **Friday 8th December 2023**. Please try to get yours to us as early as you can, to enable us to help as many families as possible.

You can visit our website for gift ideas and links to our Wish Lists.

To help you can...

- Donate new toys, gifts or books, unwrapped and suitable for children aged 0-14 years old. Chocolates, selection boxes and wrapping paper are also much appreciated!
- Make a financial donation
- Fundraise with your friends, family, community or workplace




Donate now!

You can drop gifts off with us Monday to Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm at **26 Wood Street, Manchester, M3 3EF**.

Or to arrange a collection please call **0161 834 3140** or email collections@woodstreetmission.org.uk



Get in touch or visit us at

-  www.woodstreetmission.org.uk
-  fundraise@woodstreetmission.org.uk
-  26 Wood Street, Manchester, M3 3EF



Scan the QR code using your camera phone for a quick link to our website!

Registered Charity No 1078337

Donations deadline - FRIDAY 8TH DECEMBER



Providing dignity and opportunity
through education

Mr Cliffe is running some Festive Fundraising Games in December so book in for some quality friendship time. Nerf Wars are taking place in the Sports Hall on **8th / 11th / 15th December** after school from 3.30-5pm. Alternatively, book in for early morning Dodgeball on 5th/6th and on 12th / 13th.

Gather your teams of five and go and have some fun!!

£10 per team!



Christmas Tea - £10 per person or £25 per family

Do remember that this is for 2 hours of fun and bottomless tea / coffee / hot chocolate and cake.

Also, if you have any unwanted gifts £10 per or donations from your businesses that would support our raffle, please send them in. They will be hugely appreciated.

Most importantly, please come along and support our fun-filled **Christmas Tea Party** on Saturday 9th December 2023 from 10-12. Invite your families, friends and neighbours! See details below and email s.few@northcestrian.co.uk for tickets.



15 - Bottomless Christmas Tea

ACEF
**CHRISTMAS
TEA!**

*Come and join us for some Christmas fun
while supporting a great cause!*

*Saturday 9th of December
10am-12pm
The Vanstone Hall
North Cestrian School
(minimum donation £10)*

*Bottomless tea/coffee/hot chocolate,
cakes and other treats, Christmas movie tables,
raffles, games, inspirational speaker
and a whole load of fun!*

acef
Building dignity and opportunity
through education and employment

16 - Christmas Tea

NORTH CESTRIAN PTFA:

CHRISTMAS RAFFLE



**YOU HAVE TO BE IN
IT TO WIN IT**

FRIDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2023
GET YOUR TICKETS NOW, VIA PARENTMAIL PMX £5
FOR 5 OR £3 FOR 3 FOR A CHANCE TO WIN AN
APPLE IPAD & MANY MORE FANTASTIC PRIZES

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 01618 928 1856 / VISIT US:
WWW.NORTHCESTRIAN.CO.UK / @NORTHCESTRIANPTA

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North Cestrian School PTFA

NCS LOTTERY

2 Draws Annually

£250 prize

ANNUAL ENTRY IS £12 WHICH GIVES YOU
ENTRY TO BOTH DRAWS IN DECEMBER & JULY

THE MORE ENTRIES YOU HAVE THE MORE CHANCE
OF WINNING VIA PARENTMAIL PMX

**PTFA NORTH CESTRIAN SCHOOL,
DUNHAM ROAD, ALTRINCHAM
WA14 4AJ**

18 - NCS Lottery

Extra-Curricular Opportunities (*activities available for all years unless stated*)



		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Week A - Blue	Before School	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading RE U8 (Y10, 11)	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading Reading Buddies Breakfast	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading
	Lunch	History U10 (Y10, 11)	KS3 Debate Club 1.15pm F1 iVival Club de Lenguas. L12	Morning breaktime: Science library S4 Break - Reading Buddies LH4	FURTHER MATHS LEVEL 2, U4. (Y10) School Choir M5 (break time) KS4 Debate Club 2.15pm LH4 Year 7/8 Drama Club L9	
	After School	Prep Club S1 Science (see teacher) (Y10, 11) Biology S2, Chem T2, S3 Geography U12 (Y10, 11) Art UH5 (Y10, 11) Esports Club U2 School Band M5 Rendezvous Café T3 Film Club to 6pm LH4 last week HT Cheer leading club (Drama Studio)	Prep Club S1 Staff CPD	Prep Club S1 Media Studies LH4 (Y10, 11) Psychology U12 (Y10, 11) Maths (see teacher) (Y10, 11) Art UH5 (Y10, 11) Anumana Code Academy U2 Science club, S6 (Y7) School Production L9	Prep Club S1 History U10 (Y10, 11) Art UH5 (Y10, 11) Food T3 (Y10, 11) Gardening group Gazebo KS4 Debate Club 2.15pm LH4	Prep Club S1 Zumba club Drama Studio
Week B - Gold	Before School	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading Reading Buddies Breakfast	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading School Choir M5 (and at break)	Breakfast Prep and Journal Reading
	Lunch		FURTHER MATHS LEVEL 2, U7, (Y11)	Break - Reading Buddies LH4	RE U8 (Y10, 11) Year 7/8 Drama Club L9	
	After School	Prep Club S1 Art UH5 (Y10, 11) Mindfulness Art Club UH5 Esports Club U2 Spike Club U5 (Y7) Rendezvous Café T3 School Band M5 Inspector Calls Rehearsal L7 Y10, Y11 Cheer-Leading Club (Drama Studio)	Prep Club S1 Staff CPD	Prep Club S1 English (see teacher) (Y10, 11) Psychology U12 (Y10, 11) Art UH5 (Y10, 11) Creative Imedia L2 (Y10, 11) Anumana Code Academy U2 Table-Top Gaming Club U5 School Production L9	Prep Club S1 Earth Science club T2 Comp. Science U2 (Y10, 11) Engineering T1 (Y10, 11) Art UH5 (Y10, 11) Psychology U10 (Y10, 11) Spanish L12 (Y10, 11) Geography U16 (Y10, 11) Inspector Calls Rehearsal L7 Y10, Y11 Food drop in T3 (Y11)	Prep Club S1 Zumba Club Drama Studio

19 - Extra Curricular Clubs

	SPORTS	CLUBS	SPORTS	CLUBS	SPORTS	CLUBS
		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
LUNCHTIME		KS4 BADMINTON TABLE TENNIS SPORTS HALL Mr. Cliffe		KS3 BADMINTON TABLE TENNIS SPORTS HALL Mr. Cliffe		KS4 BADMINTON/VOLLYBALL SPORTS HALL R. Nash
AFTER SCHOOL		Y9 / Y10 FOOTBALL TRAINING PLAYING FIELDS Mr. Cliffe Y7/Y8 CHEERLEADING SPORTS HALL R. Nash		Y9, 10 & 11 NETBALL CLUB SPORTS HALL Mrs Lawson	Netball Match Night Mrs Lawson J. Connell Year 7 and 8 Netball SPORTS HALL J. Connell Y7 FOOTBALL TRAINING PLAYING FIELDS Mr. Cliffe Y8 Football Training Playing Fields Mr Boswell	

20 - Sports Clubs Blue Week

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
LUNCHTIME	KS4 BADMINTON TABLE TENNIS SPORTS HALL Mr. Cliffe		KS3 BADMINTON TABLE TENNIS SPORTS HALL Mr. Cliffe		BADMINTON/ VOLLYBALL SPORTS HALL R. Nash
AFTER SCHOOL	Y9 / Y10 FOOTBALL TRAINING PLAYING FIELDS Mr. Cliffe		Y9, 10 & 11 NETBALL CLUB SPORTS HALL Mrs Lawson	Netball Match Night Mrs Lawson Y7 FOOTBALL TRAINING PLAYING FIELDS Mr. Cliffe Yr8 Football Training Playing Fields Mr Boswell	

21 - Sports Clubs Gold Week

Contact Us:



School Office - 0161 928 1856

Email - office@northcestrian.co.uk

REPORT AN ABSENCE TO - absence@northcestrian.co.uk