



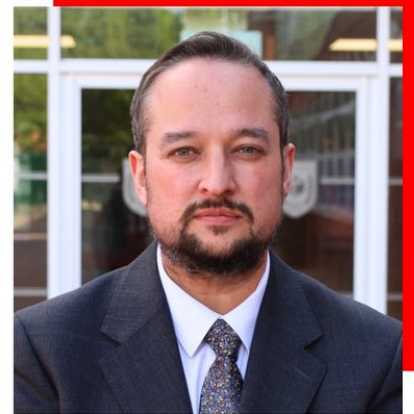
Headteacher's Newsletter



The First Full Week of Examinations

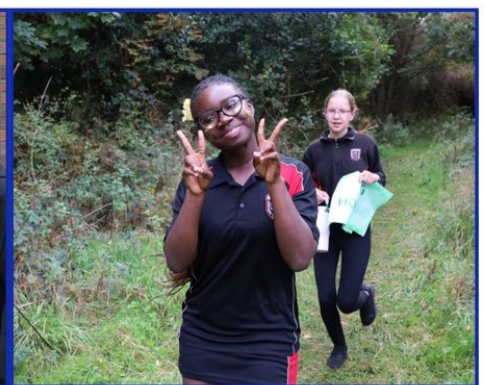
Dear families, friends and our wider community,

This week represents a really important moment for our school. I have written often that success comes in many forms and that the education of young people is about having thousands of opportunities to succeed, both inside and outside the classroom. However, it is also true that the role of any school is to provide its young people with a passport to the next destination on their journey. Ultimately, that passport is driven by examination results.



By the end of this week, all of our Year 11 students will have completed their first full week of GCSE exams. In September, I made a very conscious decision to refer to Year 11 as our *Senior Year* to reflect the importance of their role in our school. I could not have wished for a better group of students to be my first *Senior Year* as Headteacher, and they have embodied the values and attitudes of our school perfectly. Our Senior Year set the tone for the rest of the school, and their preparation for their GCSEs has truly set the tone.

I could not be more proud of our Senior Year and as they begin the journey to complete their compulsory school age education, I am genuinely excited about what they are going to achieve. They have worked so hard and every member of our community can look to Year 11 with pride as they take this chance to gain the qualifications they need for their passport to a life of choice and opportunity. Well done, Year 11 - you are ready for this and you have the whole Brownhills community on your side.





100 Years of David Attenborough

To mark Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday, our students took part in a special celebration in The Forum, organised by Team Geography. Students enjoyed the opportunity to pay tribute to one of the nation's most respected and recognisable figures, taking 100 photographs with "David" to celebrate his remarkable life and work.

Sir David's distinctive voice, lifelong dedication to the natural world and tireless commitment to protecting our planet continue to inspire young people today. It was wonderful to see our students engaging so enthusiastically with this celebration and reflecting on the importance of caring for the world around us.

Year 10 Oxford University Visit

A group of our Year 10 students enjoyed an inspiring visit to Oxford University this week, designed to help them explore routes into Russell Group universities and gain an insight into life at some of the country's most prestigious institutions.

During the visit, students took part in a Q&A session with current Oriel College students, toured the college and enjoyed a meal in the dining hall. They also visited Worcester College, where they were struck by the beauty and history of the surroundings.

I was delighted to hear how thoughtfully our students engaged with the experience and how superbly they represented our school.



BOA Sports Cup

On Friday, students from Years 7 to 10 took part in trials for the BOA Sports Cup, competing for the opportunity to represent Brownhills at the OAT Sports Cup later this year. Throughout the day, students were tested across a range of track and field events as staff worked to select the final squad for this exciting trust-wide competition.

It was a fantastic occasion, with students demonstrating an excellent balance of determination, competitiveness and sportsmanship. I was particularly pleased to see them magnanimous in victory and gracious in defeat.

Well done to all involved, and thank you to Team PE for their continued commitment to sport at Brownhills.

Year 7 PSHE Workshop - Staying Safe

Our Year 7 students recently took part in a valuable PSHE session focused on managing confrontation. The session explored a range of real-life scenarios, including peer relationships, online safety and responding to peer pressure, helping students to consider how they can make thoughtful and responsible choices in challenging situations.

I was very pleased to hear how well our students engaged with the session. They responded with maturity, listened respectfully to one another and contributed thoughtfully to group discussions. It was particularly encouraging to see them demonstrating strong interpersonal skills and confidence in speaking publicly.

Well done to Year 7 for their excellent engagement and thank you to Mr McGlynn for leading this really important work to keep our students safe and healthy.





Year 10 Poetry - Power & Conflict

Our Year 10 students have been undertaking some important work in English as part of their study of the Power and Conflict poetry anthology for GCSE English Literature. Across the unit, students will explore 15 poems which consider a range of powerful themes, including the power of nature, the power of people, conflict, control, memory and historical struggle.

Recently, Year 10 studied Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Ozymandias*, beginning with a discussion of the poem's deeper ideas. These included the power of time and nature, humanity's insignificance within the wider universe and the futility of control. This is challenging and thought-provoking material, and it has been wonderful to see our students approaching it with such maturity and curiosity.

Work of this kind is incredibly valuable as it encourages students to think beyond the surface of a text, to explore how writers use language and structure, and to develop their own interpretations with confidence. These are not only essential skills for GCSE success, but also important skills for life.

I have been delighted by the quality of discussion and written work taking place. Our students are engaging thoughtfully with complex ideas and producing work of which they should be very proud.

Year 9 History - Martin Luther King Jr.

Our Year 9 students have been studying American Civil Rights in History, exploring a vital and powerful period of the twentieth century. Their learning has taken them from the abolition of slavery in the USA in 1865 through to the long and difficult struggle for equality and civil rights that continued for more than 100 years.

As part of this topic, students have examined key events and individuals, including the death of Emmett Till, the actions of Rosa Parks and the desegregation of public schools. These are complex and, at times, hard-hitting lessons, but I have been extremely impressed to hear about the maturity and thoughtfulness shown by our students across the year group.

Most recently, students have been learning about the role of Martin Luther King Jr in the Civil Rights Movement and the impact of his famous speech, which helped to galvanise African Americans and supporters of equality into action. This is important historical learning, helping students understand the courage, sacrifice and determination of those who fought injustice.

Well done to all the students engaging respectfully with such significant issues and developing their understanding of how history continues to shape the world we live in today.



Looking Ahead

This week, we continue to work as a community. We must all work together to ensure that everybody's experience at our great school is a fantastic one, every single day. We must all play our part to ensure that everyone around us can succeed. The best thing we can all do to support Year 11 is to keep our school the positive, supportive, motivated, ambitious and focused place it has been all year. There will be times over the next few weeks where our Year 11s are feeling the pressure, so, in the words of Maya Angelou, 'Try to be the rainbow, in someone's cloud'. We are here for you Year 11. You've got this. We are so proud of you.

With very best wishes,
Mr R T Doodson
 Headteacher