

	<p>Be your best self, be:</p> <p>Ambitious; Resilient; Responsible; Respectful to yourself and others.</p>		<p>Creating outstanding education in all of our schools to enable every young person to flourish and realise their full potential.</p>
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OUR VISION *(Our cause; our key belief)*

<p>Be Your Best Self</p>	<p>During their 7 years with us at the school, we want all students to maximise their potential through excellent academic and personal development.</p> <p>Each individual should also be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● aware of the needs of others in their thoughts and actions; ● empowered to control their own well-being; ● able to achieve fulfilment in their current and future lives.
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OUR CORE VALUES *(These should be seen, experienced & lived)*

All staff and governors at Tadcaster Grammar School are expected to recognise and uphold the STAR Multi Academy Trust **values** of trust, openness and service. In addition:

<p>All staff are expected to consistently model the following values which underpin everything we do, every day:</p>	
<p>Students considered first</p>	<p>All of our decisions should put the needs of students first. All students will be known well, included, valued and heard.</p>
<p>High expectations - no limitations</p>	<p>We do not prejudice potential by preconceptions about individuals or groups of students.</p>
<p>The right curriculum experience for each student</p>	<p>We respond to the aspirations and needs of individual students with a broad and balanced curriculum and diverse co-curricular offer.</p>
<p>The best support for each student</p>	<p>Students are individuals with their own needs and requirements; our care and pastoral support systems need to reflect this.</p>

<p>All students are expected and supported to show the following values in everything they do in school, every day:</p>	
<p>Ambition and resilience</p>	<p>To show a desire and determination to achieve success.</p>
<p>Responsibility</p>	<p>To take ownership for their actions and work in and out of school.</p>
<p>Respect</p>	<p>To be considerate to themselves and others.</p>

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope the start to your 2020s is going well and thank you for your support during the Autumn term. The recent newsletter (available on the school website) celebrates some of the fantastic work the students were involved in.

As a headteacher starting in a new school, part of my professional development is to plan for and then reflect upon the 'first 100 days' of my service, a point which is fast approaching. An important part of this is securing the **vision and values** for the school, in partnership with students, parents and staff. Thank you to all who contributed to this on-line. I am delighted to share with you the values which underpin our commitment to support all students to '**Be Your Best Self**'. The statement overleaf will have many uses, and it is important that the values are integrated into the fabric of the school and inform our expectations, thoughts and behaviours.

We continue to support all of our young people to develop **ambition** and **resilience**, as well as taking **responsibility for themselves and others both in and out of school**. The notion of **respect** is often hijacked by young people, fuelled by fanciful media perceptions and inappropriate role modelling, but at TGS we greatly value developing students' **self respect** and **respect for others**. These are all skills for life which will pay an individual back time and time again in their current and future lives.

You will also notice the values we believe in as staff, primarily the commitment to **consider the needs of students first** in our thoughts and decision making.

However, we do not live in a perfect world. As parents you will be more than aware of the challenges that, for instance, social media presents to the safety and wellbeing of your children. As a parent of teenagers, I am concerned about the literature being published about the link between social media use and mental health and wellbeing. I cannot help but make parallels to, for instance, smoking tobacco in the 1950s until recent times when the product was marketed as healthy and life enhancing, despite the emerging medical evidence to the contrary. I wonder what we will all be reflecting upon concerning children's social media use and its impacts on their mental state in 10-20 years time? I'm sure you have Googled '*social media+mental health+children*' many times and felt concerned. I know I have. At school we take this issue to task and provide guidance in our PSHCE programmes, but the power to use social media *responsibly* partly rests with the children and, *ultimately*, us as parents.

One of the other symptoms of unregulated social media use we see in school very rarely is scenarios involving altercations on-line between students and groups of students outside of school time which then come into school and manifest themselves as incidents and behaviours which contravene our expectations and **vision and values**, notably **taking responsibility** and **respecting ourselves and others**. If students are involved in disagreements in school, and do not meet our expectations for behaviour, they will be sanctioned in line with our Behaviour Policy. Conversely, they will be rewarded for meeting and exceeding our exacting standards. *We do of course need your ongoing support though.*

Perhaps one of the most challenging aspects schools are faced with is students who refuse to follow reasonable instructions from staff; I have certainly seen this develop in our young people over 24 years and in 7 schools as a teacher. We call this 'defiance' and I am convinced this behaviour is championed for young people on media by, for instance, professional footballers whose default reaction to an approach from a referee is to instantly and aggressively challenge authority and to try to deflect **responsibility** away from themselves. We are exceptionally lucky at TGS as our students are generally polite, courteous and delightful children and young adults. On the rare occasions when we experience defiance, students can expect to be sanctioned, but also to have the opportunity to empathise, reflect upon and understand the importance of being **aware of the needs of others in their thoughts and actions**. This is not just for school; we regard this as a skill for life. *Again, it is also important to note how vitally important the support of parents is when we are rightfully challenging and addressing such behaviour.*

Finally a (mini) 'win' to report, we've arranged for the potholes in the school road be filled in and we will be taking down some of the metal barrier and adding another standing area on the way around 'the loop' so parents have a larger area to drop off/pick up their children safely. We remain concerned about the safety issues presented by traffic at the starts and ends of the school day which is why we have a staff presence outside school at these times (and thank you to all who give the staff on duty a cheery wave, we really appreciate it, especially when it is raining!).

I look forward to seeing you in school in the following weeks. As usual, I will close by saying that I hope you have a strong confidence in the school and, if you feel we have fallen short, that your concerns are listened to carefully and addressed in a timely fashion.

Mr A Parkinson - Headteacher - 20 JAN 20