

1 June 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

RE: Sad News

I am writing to you today to share with you news that has once again rocked our school community. Late last week we learned that our much-loved former mathematics teacher Mr Richard Clough had died of a heart attack whilst teaching at his new school in Kettlethorpe, and on Sunday we learned that Mr Lewis Howlett, our beloved English teacher had died after going swimming in the River Aire with a friend. Words cannot describe how we as a community are feeling following receipt of this most tragic news. Both Richard and Lewis truly represented the best that our profession had to offer, their dedication and sheer love of teaching shone through in every lesson that they taught, and our students absolutely adored them both.

Richard had worked at three GORSE schools over a number of years and was truly an absolute delight to watch in the classroom. The way he was able to engage children in mathematics was unrivalled and I know that all students who were taught by him will agree that his humour and infectious enthusiasm shone through at every opportunity. Testament to his ability to form positive relationships with all students, even after only eight months at Kettlethorpe, the outpouring of grief on their social media pages is tangible. We are all greatly upset to learn of his passing.

At just 25 years old, Lewis was an absolute rising star. He was in his third year with us at The Farnley Academy and was known and respected by all. Lewis' ability to teach English was just astonishing. Having personally witnessed him teach on a number of occasions he sought every opportunity to bring the subject to life. Lewis promoted literacy and a love of reading to all and had a unique ability to engage even the most disengaged reader. Such was the quality of Lewis' teaching, after just 12 months working in the academy, Lewis took on his first management responsibility as a 'Teaching & Learning Leader'. Coupled with this, Lewis volunteered to lead the school in our efforts to promote Oracy through our Trust wide Voice21 programme. Whilst standing in Lewis' classroom this morning, admiring his wall of thank you cards from students, it is so abundantly clear that Lewis had so much more to give and had he had the opportunity would have gone on to achieve great things for our school and the wider teaching profession. Our community is absolutely devastated by his untimely death.

Over the course of today, our Inclusion team have been contacting parents / carers of children who we believe are most likely to be distressed by this news. Our calls are to share with families this sad news and offer support wherever it is required. In addition to this, please be assured that we have put in place a variety of support offerings for our staff, who are deeply upset by this traumatic news.

Over the coming days, it is important that as parents / carers you speak to your child throughout to ensure that they are ok. When reacting to a traumatic incident, children may display behaviours such as the following:

- Clinging closely to adults
- Displaying regressive behaviours
- Appearing not to be affected
- Thinking about it privately
- Asking a lot of questions
- Appearing frightened
- Appearing agitated and angry
- Appearing sad and withdrawn
- Difficulty sleeping

If you are at all concerned about how your child is handling this news, please get in touch with a member of our Inclusion team who will put in place any required support. Details of the Inclusion Team can be found below:

KS3			KS4		
Mrs Hartley	Mrs Archer	Miss Tracey	Mr Hill	Mrs Baldwin	Miss Martin-Mitchell

Alternatively, for more information on supporting your child, or to receive immediate support, please contact Winston's Wish (<https://www.winstonswish.org>) or Child Line (<https://www.childline.org.uk>).

I would like to thank our community for their support during this difficult time and know that you will join with me in issuing our most heartfelt condolences to both Mr Clough and Mr Howlett's family and friends.

Yours faithfully



Mr C Stokes
Principal