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Dear Headteacher

For the last seven years, North Yorkshire County Council has hosted a highly successful youth debating competition for Y5/6 pupils across the region. The competition begins at district level and culminates at the Council Chamber in County Hall where heat winners debate to become County Champions. We are inviting all Primary Schools in North Yorkshire to enter the 2020 Debating Competition.

Participation has grown over the last seven years with 72 primary schools participating in 2019's competition. As we enter our eighth year we aim to grow involvement again.

Schools that have participated in past competitions, at both regional and county level, have given very positive feedback about their involvement in the event and its value to the children who took part. Participation also contributes towards the delivery of the National Curriculum for English including the statutory requirements to "participate in discussions, presentations, performances, role play, improvisations and debates" outlining the need to develop children's "confidence, enjoyment and mastery of language" which "should be extended through public speaking, performance and debate". Clearly this work also supports the development of reading and writing skills in the preparation and research they have to undertake to prepare for the debates.

The competition consists of teams of six Y5/6 pupils debating a pre-determined subject before a judging panel.

This year the format of the competition has changed slightly. Schools are presented with 3 topics (below). Schools should pick **ONE** topic to debate in the heats and then finalists will pick a different topic to debate in the final. This way schools will be unaware of the topics opposing teams have chosen and should result in questions being based on the content of the debate presented instead of relying on pre prepared material.

This year we are also introducing ticketing system for asking questions. Each school will be given a number of tickets and these will then be exchanged for a question to an opposing school. We hope this will ensure that every school has an equal chance to ask questions.

Points are awarded for delivery/presentation, content, facts, questions and answers.

Schools should choose **ONE** of the below questions to debate:

'Should mobile phones be allowed in school?'

'Does the internet do more harm than good?'

'Can we have an impact on Climate Change?'

The regional heats are held in the local district council chambers, and run from 10:00am-12:00pm.

The dates for the 2020 heats are as follows;

Hambleton- Monday 9th March

Selby- Tuesday 10th March

Scarborough- Thursday 12th March

Harrogate- Friday 13th March

Ryedale- Monday 16th March

Craven- Tuesday 17th March

Virtual Heat- Thursday 19th March (For those schools who, due to location, are unable to participate at the district heats). Please note the school will require skype facilities

Richmond- Friday 20th March

The final will be held in June at a location TBC.

Schools wishing to enter will need to

- Be available to compete on the relevant date
- Field a team of six Y5/6 pupils. For smaller schools wishing to enter we would encourage collaborating with other local schools to form a team.
- Have a team consisting of two pupils to present the debate, and four to ask questions (each speaker having two minutes followed by four minutes for questions from any of the schools present). Please note, credit will be given for questions asked in response to the current debate, not necessarily pre prepared questions.

If you wish to enter a team, please email jessica.sangster@northyorks.gov.uk including your school name, the heat you wish to enter and details of the relevant point of contact within the school. We need expressions of interest by no later than **Friday 14th February 2020**.

We hope you will give serious consideration to your school's participation in this great initiative - who knows, we might find a great public speaker or politician of the future!

Yours sincerely



Stuart Carlton
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