



Principal: Mr Paul Willerton

Dear Parent/Carer

21 October 2021

As we approach the end of the first half term of the academic year, I would like to send a big thank you for your support in enabling such a positive eight weeks. The standard of uniform, equipment and engagement in lessons is the best we have seen at the academy. Students have worked incredibly hard in lessons to make sure they make every moment count.

#### **Enrichment**

We have been able to launch our enrichment programme fully to all students, with forty clubs running across the week and over two hundred and fifty students staying back each night to take part. The list of enrichment clubs and the night they run can be found on the academy website [here](#).

#### **Class Charts**

The academy has officially launched the four core academy values – to be kind, reflective, resilient and part of a community. Students have shown these characteristics in abundance over this first half term. The launch of the Class Charts app has enabled parents to be notified when their child has been rewarded by staff for these values and for the student's attitude to learning in lessons. All password and logins have been sent via the gateway app. After consultation with the parent council, we are now in a position for any negative behaviour points to also be shared on the app, starting when we return on Tuesday 2 November.

You will have seen that there is also a homework section on the app, we do intend in the long term to move homework away from Satchel One and onto the app so that all the information is in one place but this will not be ready until the summer term and will be launched in September 2022. In the meantime, please keep engaging with Satchel One for homework. A further letter will be sent to parents on our return, as work for students who are self-isolating will now be set on their Microsoft Teams account as from Tuesday 02 November.

#### **Reading**

One of the academy priorities over recent years has been to build on the excellent work undertaken by our primary schools when teaching reading. This has continued this year, with students reading together in Ready to Learn. They access a number of texts which enable staff and students to discuss a range of challenging themes. The [link](#) gives details of the texts students are reading at the academy but also the "reading cannon" which gives a broad range of advised reading for students at home.

#### **Head of Year 9 and Assistant Director of Sixth Form staffing change**

Following the departure of Miss Gittins, Mr D Hughes has been appointed as the new Assistant Director of Sixth Form. Congratulations to Mrs Boylan who has been appointed as the new Head of Year for Year 9. She will work alongside the year group Achievement Leader Mr R Hughes when we return to the academy after half term.

#### **Covid-19**

You will be very aware that the positive Covid-19 cases continue to be high across the country for students aged 11-15. I am still awaiting information on how the local authority intends to launch its vaccination programme. Once I have this information, I will write to all parents/carers. It has been announced this week that the vaccination booking system will be opened to 12-15 year olds next week for those who wish to have the vaccine.



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To ensure we have a seamless return after the half term break, we are strongly advised to promote the following to parents and carers:

- Students to continue lateral flow testing twice a week over the half term break
- If a student has been in close contact with a positive case or lives with someone who has tested positive, please take a lateral flow test daily
- Masks continue to be recommended rather than compulsory. We are watching the number of cases closely and may be required to make the wearing of masks compulsory again in the future.

It is important to clarify a number of queries that we have had from parents and carers regarding the attendance coding used. When a student exhibits symptoms and is taken for a PCR test, the student will self-isolate at home and the attendance code used will be an "X". This means the student's attendance is not affected. If a student then tests positive, unfortunately this code is then converted to an "I" code which counts as an absence for the period of time the student is isolating. I appreciate parents/carers frustrations with this, I also agree that it is incredibly unfair. I have expressed my concerns to the Department for Education but at the time of writing the national stance to use the "I" code is still in place.

## Standards

A quick reminder of some basic standards and expectations at the academy. Please support your child in their education by supplying the basic equipment below:

- A bag that can at least hold a PE kit, A4 exercise books and equipment. Any bag that can't hold these items is not a suitable school bag.
- Pen, pencil, ruler, eraser, pencil sharpener.
- A green pen (provided by the academy)
- A mini whiteboard and pen (provided by the academy)
- PE kit on the days they have PE. Students will be expected to borrow a kit if they have forgotten their own.

A reminder that facial piercings are not allowed at the academy. This is not a new rule at the academy and if students were to attend, with their nose pierced for example, it would have to be removed.

## Return and school dates

A reminder that **Monday 1 November is a staff training day**, so all students will return at the normal time on Tuesday 02 November. The calendar for 2022/23 has been agreed by Trustees and uploaded to the website.

I hope that everyone enjoys a restful half term and we look forward to welcoming the students back on Tuesday 02 November.

Yours faithfully

P Willerton  
Principal



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