

Dear Parent/Carer

As we complete another successful half term at the academy, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for all your support over the last six weeks. Due to Covid-19, there have been days this half-term where staffing has been tight at the academy, at the highest point we had 18 staff not being able to attend work due to Covid-19. Staff have worked incredibly hard to ensure this did not impact on your child's education. This means we avoided having to switch to online learning, collapse classes or reduce our curriculum offer. Students have continued to access their full curriculum and where possible staff have delivered lessons on Zoom to the class from home to ensure students continue to get teacher input.

There are no current plans to stagger the return after the half-term break, this means all students will return as normal on Monday 21 February. To reduce the impact on student attendance, can you please continue with your weekly testing routine on Sunday and Wednesday. This should reduce the chance of any asymptomatic cases on site.

Staffing

Many of you will be aware of the fantastic news that Miss Keenan, Head of Year for Year 10, is expecting a baby later in the year. Due to the current Covid-19 measures, Miss Keenan will be working from home after the half-term break. Mrs Owen has been appointed as temporary Head of Year 10 and has been working alongside the year group for a handover period. This will mean that Year 10 parents/carers will be able to communicate regularly with both Mrs Owen and Miss Keenan until her maternity leave officially starts.

To support with consistency, Mrs Owen will be the Head of Year for this year group until the students leave the academy at the end of Year 11. When Miss Keenan re-joins the academy after her maternity leave, she will re-join the year group, meaning the students will have two heads of year as support in their final few months with us.

Parent and Student Voice

Thank you for all the responses we have had to the different surveys that have been sent out by the academy. We have sought opinions on a range of different topics such as academy reports, homework, personal social and health education (PSHE) and safeguarding.

Changes we have made following these surveys include;

- Introduction of a fortnightly safeguarding newsletter
- Development of the communication policy so that there are clear expectations on returning phone calls and messages.
- Re-designing the Key Stage 3 academy reports and tracking system ready for next academic year
- The vast majority of parents were happy with the volume of homework provided but, we are developing our use of Microsoft Teams over the next six months, so that curriculum information for students is more easily accessible.

We have scheduled any surveys for the remainder of the year to enable us to seek feedback regularly, whilst also ensuring that multiple surveys are not sent out at the same time.



The Sutton Academy

Together Students Achieve

Principal: Mr Paul Willerton

Anti-Bullying

Our Deputy Head Girl Abbie Mills is continuing her project, which focuses on educating students on how they can seek support if they are being bullied. This most recently included an interview with myself which will be shared at a later date. A reminder that, if any parent, carer or student is concerned about an incident of bullying, or any form of abuse that they want to report or feel needs to be escalated, please email report@thesuttonacademy.org.uk; which will ensure key members of the leadership team are made aware.

Standards (a regular reminder):

I realise that for the majority of parents, my regular standards reminder may become repetitive. I apologise for this but unfortunately after each half-term break we do still have a very small number of students who arrive with the incorrect footwear, hair colour, with false nails or without equipment.

We firmly believe that students' education should not be hampered by a lack of equipment. Below is a list of equipment that is non-negotiable;

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

To make sure that staffs' focus can be on students learning and wellbeing, can we please make sure that students return with the **correct** shoes and uniform. Students are not permitted to wear false nails, nail varnish, false eye lashes or dye their hair an unnatural colour. Further details can be found on the uniform section of the academy website.

Thank you again for your continued support. I hope everyone enjoys the well-earned rest and I look forward to welcoming all students back on Monday 21 February.

Yours faithfully

Mr P Willerton
Principal

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