

Dear Parent/Carer

I would like to extend my thanks for your continued support over this six-week half-term. Even though this is one of the shorter half-terms, it has been a busy and productive one with numerous trips and events at the academy. The last day of term is **Friday 13 February**, and the academy will close at the normal time of 2.40pm. We then reopen at the normal time of 8.35am on **Monday 23 February**. There will be a number of revision sessions taking place for Year 11 during the half-term holiday, and the timetable for these can be found [here](#).

**"You said, we did"**

During this half-term, the focus of our parent/carers and student feedback was around Behaviour and Safeguarding. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive on how students feel safe on site and in the academy. There were two main points that students and parents/carers mentioned.

- 1) Due to the increase in student numbers, the corridors can be busy during lesson change-overs and at break and lunchtimes. We have implemented one-way systems at key points around the site and also certain corridors release classes two minutes earlier to relieve the pressure on the stairs. I led on assemblies at the start of the half-term and explained the expectations of students at these times, and explained our introduction of the unstructured 'On-Calls', which have now been implemented. Students are fully aware of the trigger system of two unstructured 'On-Calls' leading to an Internal Suspension and a third as an off-site suspension. This is in the best interests of all students to ensure that they can move around site safely.
- 2) Parents/carers were unsure of how they could escalate concerns if they did not feel an incident had been addressed effectively. I have shared the below information in the past and felt it was a good time to remind parents/carers. If you have contacted the academy and have not received a response, please email the communication promise email address which is: [communicationpromise@thesuttonacademy.org.uk](mailto:communicationpromise@thesuttonacademy.org.uk). This sends your concerns directly to me and the Director of Operations so that we can investigate. Details of the Communication Promise can be found [here](#). Also, if a parent/carers would like to report bullying but are struggling to get through by telephoning, please email the report bullying email address: [report@thesuttonacademy.org.uk](mailto:report@thesuttonacademy.org.uk). This goes directly to me and the Senior Vice Principal, Ms Gobin so that we can ensure it is addressed.

**Mobile Phones**

I spoke with the students at the start of this half-term about mobile phones; an area I have been reflecting on over the last few weeks. You will be aware that there is a national push for mobile phones to be banned in schools, a stance the academy has had for a number of years. A number of schools are now introducing a 'security pouch' system where students magnetically lock their mobile phones in the pouch when they arrive and can only unlock them at the end of the school day. I reminded the students of our expectations with mobile phones and that I was reluctant to introduce such a scheme as it is expensive, considering that we already have a policy in place. With this being said, I have previously expressed my concerns with how often students are going to the toilet during lessons. My concern is that this is so they can check their mobile phones as they find any length of time away from social media a challenge.

The students are aware that this is something I am monitoring and I will be making a decision in the weeks to come. What I do ask is for support from parents/carers where possible. It is a concern how much time young people spend on their mobile phones and it can be with no parental restrictions. On most phones it is possible for parents/carers to limit screen time and

monitor the content they are accessing; this is something we advise. This may limit your child to only using their mobile phone at certain times of the day.

We are finding that overwhelmingly when students are going on their phones it is to reply or even answer calls from home, despite the fact this is when they are at the academy. We appreciate there will be times you will need to get a message to your child, please do so by calling the main office and then a member of staff will discretely pass the message on to students.

#### **New Ofsted Toolkit**

Please find below a link which takes you to the Ofsted YouTube channel, the video is the 'parent guide' to how the new Ofsted reports will look. You will be able to see how the traditional grading of schools has ended, and the report cards look very different also. [Link](#)

#### **Standards (a regular reminder)**

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 so that students can access their learning.

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

To ensure that the staffs focus can be on students' learning and wellbeing, can we please make sure that students return back with the correct shoes and uniform. Students are not permitted to wear false nails, nail varnish, fake eye lashes or dye their hair an unnatural colour. Further information can be found on the uniform section of the academy website. There has recently been an increase in a number of students wearing fake eye lashes and nails which has led to them being taken out of lessons until these are removed. Please support the academy by making sure these are removed before your child attends.

#### **Return Dates**

All students will return at the normal time of 8.35am on Monday 23 February.

I hope that everyone enjoys a restful break.

Yours faithfully



Mr P. Willerton  
Principal