

Dear Parent / Carer

Re: A purposeful and productive fresh start

Firstly, I would like to wish you a very Happy New Year. I hope that you had a fulfilling and enjoyable festive season over the past two weeks. The nature of this holiday is busy and it can sometimes result in you questioning, when you return to work, whether or not you have actually had a holiday! I hope, that if this the case, you can look back on some wonderful memories and experiences with those who you are closest to.

Although we are only two days into the spring term, there is no doubt that our start has been a purposeful and productive one. January can be a challenging time to motivate yourself back into learning, made even harder by the fact that some schools have not yet returned from their Christmas break, and yet our pupils have applied themselves very well and are building a strong foundation from which to progress over the course of the next eleven weeks of this term. It was particularly good to see young people greeting their friends on Thursday morning; there was laughter, enjoyment and support offered for those who, for whatever reason, have not had such a positive Christmas experience. Another example of the kindness and compassion that so many of our pupils show each other and a theme I will explore further in my assemblies with all year groups, next week.

Further updates this week are as follows:

1. Expectations reminder and our Standards Cycle – I begin with a reminder of our core expectations for this year and how we intend to continually reinforce these through our Standards Cycle. From Monday, we will be spending the first two weeks re-focusing on ensuring that mobiles phones are not seen or heard between the hours of 8:30 and 15:15. We will then be focusing on punctuality to school and lessons followed by a focus on uniform standards. Pupils will receive their new Smart Cards for this term in form time next week and must have these on their presence at all times. Consistent breaches of Academy policy will result in impact time which could include 45 minutes of time after the school day. As ever, we thank you for your support in ensuring our policies are being followed at all times.
2. Relevant equipment to lessons – Please can the Academy remind parents and carers of the importance of their child/ren bringing the correct equipment to lessons. This includes, for example, bringing calculators to maths and science lessons. All pupils should have the correct writing equipment for their subjects and correct PE kit. If you are having difficulties in supporting your child/ren with having the correct equipment, please do not hesitate to contact your child's/ren's form tutor so that we can make the necessary arrangements.
3. Downloaded the SIMS Parent App – Our SIMS Parent App provides you with up-to-date information about your child/ren including their conduct points, both rewards and impact time, recent reports and a 'live' account of their attendance each day. If you do not have access to this app, we have provided a guidance document attached to this letter and on our social media pages today to help you gain access to this important communication tool from the Academy. If you continue to have problems accessing this app, please let your child's/ren's form tutor aware so that we can inform our technical team.
4. Dates for the diary next half-term – A reminder that we have year 11 parents' evening on **Thursday 11th January**. We also have year 9 parents' evening taking place on **Thursday 25th January** and years 12 and 13 parents' evening on **Thursday 8th February**. All evenings will take place from 16:00-19:00.
5. The importance of good attendance – The Academy would like to remind parents and carers of the importance of their child/ren attending school regularly and promptly. There is a proven link between attendance about 96% and strong academic outcomes. This was made very clear in our year 11 GCSE outcomes last year, for example. For further details about our attendance policies and procedures, please visit our website [here](#).
6. Good hygiene practices – We are now very much in the season of cold, flu and other unpleasant bugs which are spreading around post the festive season. Please could we ask you to remind your child/ren about the importance of washing their hands on regular occasions to stop the spread of germs as much as we possibly can.
7. Tuesday Open Mornings – We are now in a place to 'go live' with our monthly Tuesday Open Mornings for a second year running. This was a successful initiative has been set up for parents and carers of existing pupils and students in the school to see our Academy "in action" and be involved in a Q and A session with

me or a member of the leadership team after the tour. The purpose of these tours is to provide you with an insight into the excellent work that colleagues do, as well as the diligence and drive of our young people. Bookings are on a 'first come first serve basis' for the first tour on **Tuesday 23rd January** and you can book a [place here](#). If you do not manage to get onto this first slot, we will be running the open mornings monthly and can confirm that the next two will take place this term will be on Tuesday 13th February and Tuesday 19th March.

8. Year 10 careers provision this term - We are excited to announce that year 10 will be starting to have their statutory 1-to-1 Careers Information and Guidance Meetings with an external and independent Level 6 Qualified Advisor as of Monday 8th January. It is the aim that all year 10 pupils will have their individual hour-long meeting before the end of the summer term to discuss their career goals, ambitions and next steps for their post-16 education and training. Pupils will be notified on the morning of their meeting, being given a reminder slip with the date, time and place of the meeting. Following their meetings, a personalised action plan will be generated and shared on Unifrog for pupils and parents to access.

This concludes the brief updates this week. The spring term is short and may not have the same extensive demands as the winter term that we have just completed. However, there are lots of events, processes and initiatives to complete in eleven weeks meaning it is always busy and fast-paced. As always though, if you contact the Academy, we will endeavour to get back to you within 2 school days even if it is a holding response whilst we look into the matter further. We look forward though to more Academy successes in 2024 built upon our key priorities. These are embedding a culture where all teachers are continually developing and improving their practice, refining our curriculum with the aim of it being accessible for all, sustaining a culture where staff and pupils are confident and reflective, through successful systems and processes and, finally, continuing our plan of regenerating the learning environment, providing inspiring classrooms, corridors and learning spaces.

In the words of David Bowie, "Tomorrow belongs to those who can hear it coming."

Best wishes,

Duncan Roberts

Principal