

Dear Parent / Carer

Re: Examples of kindness

I hope you had an enjoyable Easter break. It has been a pleasure to welcome back our community this week to begin the summer term. It only feels like yesterday that I was writing the first newsletter of the academic year and here we are now, beginning the final third. This week it has been great to see how positive and happy pupils have been to return to school, see their friends and immerse themselves back into learning. The school has been a calm, purposeful and respectful environment, establishing an excellent foundation from which to build upon over what will be an eventful few months to come with public examinations, celebration events and transition days to name a few. Although the calendar in this term is always busy, it is also the term where the most powerful and positive memories are formed for our young people of their school days that they will look back on fondly, long into adulthood.

Updates this week are as follows:

1. Closure of School Lane from 10<sup>th</sup> May – You may remember that last term, School Lane was due to be closed for significant bridge works but that this was delayed. I have now been informed that this work will start on 29<sup>th</sup> April and that School Lane will be closed from 10<sup>th</sup> May. Please can I remind parents and carers who drop off and pick up their children by car, that it is not going to be possible for parents and carers to use Bury Water Lane until this work is complete. I will remind you of the more detailed information of how we plan to manage this disruption, next week.
2. New uniform update – I can confirm that our new uniform which will be compulsory for years 7-10 (next academic year) from September 2024 has now been agreed. The Academy is now working on a simpler and more concise uniform policy which will be published later this term. I can confirm that the formal nature of uniform will broadly stay the same. For example, blazers, or tailored jackets, will remain part of our uniform as a result of the feedback we have received from the community. The main change will be the kilt, which will no longer be tartan but plain navy with a yellow band at the top and a logo at the bottom. It will be an expectation that the band and the logo will need to be seen at all times. The website where you can order new uniform will go live next month where you can place orders, ready for September.
3. Accessing water during the school day – Pupils can access water in our canteen or through our water fountains before school, during break and lunch and after school. Staff will not allow pupils to fill up water bottles during lesson time as it is important that their learning is not disrupted by this. It is also important that pupils access water well in advance of period 3 and 5 starting, so that they are not late to these lessons.
4. Whole Academy photograph – You may remember that it was our intention to undertake the process of a whole Academy photograph this week. Upon reflection, we decided to postpone this activity until 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024, next academic year. We will provide further information about how this will work in early September.
5. Governor opportunity at an Anglian Learning School – As you may know one of our feeder schools, Wimbish Primary Academy, is part of our Trust. There is now an exciting governor opportunity that has arisen at Wimbish to help shape the direction of the Academy moving forward in the next chapter of its journey. The best way for you to see what the school has to offer is to arrange a visit. Anglian Learning's Head of Governance, Dr Kerrie Jones, will be happy to answer any initial questions you may have. If you are ready to apply, please contact [kjones@anglianlearning.org](mailto:kjones@anglianlearning.org) for an application.
6. Feedback regarding Mr Roberts' end of week communications – Thank you for your very helpful feedback regarding my end of week newsletter which I sent out at the end of last term. The overall results were as follows:
  - a. 78% of you think the length of the newsletter is about right. Surprisingly, none of you think the newsletter is too short!

- b. Just over 60% think that it should continue to be published weekly with the majority of the rest suggesting fortnightly.
- c. It is almost a 50/50 split regarding which colleague should write the newsletter.
- d. 93% would like the newsletter to continue to be published on a Friday.
- e. There are very thoughtful and helpful comments about how we could improve the format and content moving forward.

The next steps in relation to this are, I will be devising some potential new formats for you, thinking about specific information that you would like to be included in the communication and then share these suggestions with you after May half-term.

- 7. Pupil achievements – Siblings, William B in year 11 and Holly B in year 8 have returned after Easter from their overseas competition in Las Vegas at the North American Open Karate Championships. Holly won gold and William won silver and bronze with the squad of 13, bringing back a total of 17 medals to the UK. Both pupils have now been selected to attend the European Championships in Poland in October which is a real achievement and recognition of their hard work and dedication to their training. Well done to William and Hollie on this very impressive achievement.

This completes the updates this week. I finish by informing you of an act of kindness and maturity this week from one of our year 7 pupils. After school this week, Beth R was walking through the car park at Newport Surgery when she found an elderly lady who had fallen over and into bushes. As a result of the fall, they had received quite significant cuts and bruising. Beth knelt down with the lady to provide her with reassurance that she was going to be okay. She then told her that she needed to get some help but would be back shortly. Beth found a family member and then went back to sit with the lady whilst the family member raised the alarm in the surgery prompting the nurses to come and provide assistance. There are many examples of kindness that we see from our pupils on a day-to-day basis and, unfortunately, on occasion, times where more kindness is required. This is a great example from Beth of the maturity and empathy that our pupils have and the credit they are to our school.

I end this week with, you guessed it, a quote! My weekly quote has prompted a surprising amount of comments in the feedback that you have given about my newsletters... Whether you are a fan, or, not such a fan, I am pleased it has provided the communication with an identity and a uniqueness, which resonates with the ethos of JFAN.

In the words of 19th century French clergyman, Joseph Roux, "A fine quotation is a diamond in the hand of a man of wit and a pebble in the hand of a fool."

Have a great weekend,

Duncan Roberts  
Principal