

11th September 2023

Dear parents and carers,

I would not normally write to you after 1 week of term but I thought that you would like to hear about some of the positive experiences that our students have had since returning to the academy.

I should start by passing on my congratulations to all of the students who received their exam results during the summer holidays. We have many stories to tell of students who have done well and been able to go on to university, college, Post-16 education, apprenticeships, higher education or enter the world of work. I was particularly pleased with the GCSE English and Maths outcomes as they exceed anything that the academy has previously achieved.

We welcomed 179 new Year 7 students and 56 new Year 12 students to the academy last week. I have been incredibly impressed with all of them and am very excited to see how they develop over the next few years. We know that if our students understand our expectations then they will thrive and do well - the Year 7 students have engaged exceptionally well with our ACE programme and their attitude to learning in every single lesson has been outstanding.

The academy was fully open for 3 days last week and during that time there were **1232 separate incidents of praise recorded**. In the same period of time the academy issued 40 sanctions to students. I think that it is worth acknowledging that this means **for every sanction issued there are over 30 recorded incidents of praise** - I think that this is a really clear numerical illustration of the culture that we have developed within our academy over the last few years. Students are likely to be praised and celebrated significantly more often than they will ever be corrected or sanctioned.

If you have access to the “parent portal” then I would encourage you to log on to see just where your son or daughter is picking up their praise points from. We have introduced a “classroom champions” initiative which highlights students who have exceeded expectations in either effort, achievement or kindness in each of our lessons. Mr Tice will be working hard over the next few days to ensure that all parents who don’t yet have access to the portal can gain access.

Finally, I would like to seek your support over the coming days and weeks. An analysis of the sanctions that this academy issues has shown that lateness accounts for approximately 30% of all detentions issued. This is disproportionately high and something that should be easy to fix if we have the full support of all of our families. Our academy opens to students at 08:00 every day and students can sit and chat in the dining room. At 08:15 the classroom doors are opened and students are able to sit in their classrooms and prepare for the lesson to start. We close the doors at 08:25

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and any student that arrives after this point is late to the academy. Please can you encourage your sons and daughters to aim to arrive at 08:15 so that they do not miss any of their learning. The majority of late students do arrive within 2-3 minutes of the bell going and therefore I am convinced that this is a trend that we can reverse.

If you have not seen the academy in action then I would encourage you to attend one of our termly forums and see for yourself just how positive our classrooms are. If you're unable to attend the forums then please contact me and request a tour as I would be happy to show you around at any point.

I very much look forward to seeing all of you at some point during this term.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Southern
Principal