

22 May 2023

Dear parents and carers,

The academy is a hive of activity at the moment. Our students in years 11 and 13 are in the midst of their exams and are demonstrating to us and to themselves just how well prepared they are for these challenges. I am in the privileged position of being able to see the students as they start each exam and then listen to them critique their performance when they have finished. I have never known a group of students thrive under the pressure of exams as much as our current cohort. I am incredibly confident that they will have done well this year and that university, college or Post-16 placements will be secured and all of our students will be able to take the next step in their young lives.

It is always worth highlighting at this point the role of families in the preparation for exams. I know that our parents and carers are on-hand every day to provide emotional reassurance to our students when they have struggled or to give them the encouragement to continue with their revision when they want to give up. We are very fortunate to have a community of people as determined as us to see the young people of Newbold be successful. Thank you, the students would not be as confident about their exams if it wasn't for you.

The academy is more than just exams at the moment though. We have large numbers of students engaging in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. I believe that this is one of the most powerful movements for young people to be involved with. The skills that they learn and the experiences that they have will change them for the better and will provide life-long memories of overcoming adversity and developing friendships. I am incredibly grateful to the staff involved who have given freely of their evenings and weekends to ensure that every student who wants to be part of the scheme can be. This is not a paid activity for the staff involved, they do it because they care that our students should have these experiences. I am also thankful to the parents and carers that have dropped off and collected students from various car parks in Derbyshire and been available to help nurse poorly legs, feet and spirits back to full health following torrential rain and long walks.

This week we will be taking our Praising Stars celebrations to another level. All students will receive their reports in a sealed envelope in the dining hall as part of a celebration event. We have record numbers of students receiving additional rewards that will include opportunities to join teaching staff and learning managers for hot chocolate and cakes or the leadership team for pizza and drinks. We are working hard to increase the amount of praise and recognition that students have for their achievements. I would urge all of you to visit the academy during the school day and see what goes on. I think you would be surprised at how hard our students work and how well mannered they are

in all situations. We must find more ways to celebrate this with students as I don't think they always appreciate just how special they are.

I will be contacting you very soon to update you on our plans for the next academic year which begins on Monday 3rd July. The main change will be the return to our Vertical Mentoring Groups (VMG) and we are on track to share these new groups with you by Friday 16th June to allow you and your son or daughter time to prepare for the change. I will be delivering training to all of our staff on Friday 30th June on the theme of effective tutoring and therefore the academy is closed to all students on this day.

A final date for your diary is Friday 15th July. The PTA in conjunction with our Student Voice groups will be hosting the first summer fair that the academy has had for many years. We are looking to have lots of exciting events for students to take part in as well as local businesses being present to sell their products. The PTA is at a really exciting point in their development and I am sure that they would welcome more parents being involved to support this event and future ideas.

I look forward to seeing many of you in the academy over the coming months.

Yours sincerely,



Rob Southern
Principal