

20 September 2013

Dear parents and carers

As we start the new year I'd like to thank you for your support in making it a good start with the vast majority of students arriving on time, in correct uniform, ready to learn, polite and respectful. To ensure your child has a successful year there are three particular priorities that the academy is focusing on for all students this year:

Participation: for students to take a full and active part in school life, including our enrichment programme after school, trips and residential.

Engagement: in all lessons students take an active part in their learning; they answer questions in full sentences – spoken and written – and complete all class and home work.

Progress: in every lesson each student makes progress in their learning so that each student achieves the targets set for them.

Your feedback - I'm keen to gain a view from you as parents of how well we are catering for your child at school. Attached to this letter is a short questionnaire that I would be grateful if you could complete and return via your child to their form tutor. I hope it will only take you a few minutes to complete. I will read every one of those responses and will look to act on the feedback you give. **Please return your questionnaire by Wednesday 25 September.**

New building - Over the summer the first stages of planning for our new building took place. The intention is that by 2017 we will have a new purpose built building to accommodate 600 students and a sixth form. There will in due course be a consultation process about the plans for the new building. I will write to you later in the year about this to keep you updated about progress with this exciting project.

Admissions for next September – For parents that have children currently in the last year of primary school, the deadline for applying for secondary school places is 31 October. **Our open evening takes place on Wednesday 25 September at 6pm.** There are also open mornings taking place on Thursday 26 and Friday 27 September at 10.00am. **On Wednesday 25 September the academy day for students will finish one hour earlier at 3pm (not 4pm).**

Attendance: Your child being in school every day is key to their success and those that are in school the most make the most progress and get the best results. We take attendance very seriously, even the occasional day off. Please remember to contact us if your child needs to be off school. In some cases where attendance has become poor I have no other option than to take formal action. Last year, fourteen students were of particular concern and in three of those cases parents have been issued with a Penalty Notice – section 444 (1A,) Education Act 1996 resulting in a fine up to £120. Ongoing failure to pay and attend school can result in a fine of up to £1,000 for each parent plus costs.

Potential disruption on Tuesday 1 October - You may have heard in the news that two of the teaching unions have called for strike action in the West Midlands on Tuesday 1 October. I will do all I can to keep the academy open on this day should the strike action go ahead. However, I will need to take a view nearer the time whether this is possible if the strike action goes ahead. I will let you know next week what the position is.

As always, I look forward to your working with you this term to ensure your child does their best at all times.

Yours sincerely

Mr K Larkin
Principal