



October 2018

Dear parent or carer,

We have had a busy half term with a number of very successful events including our Open Evening, Careers' Fair, MacMillan Coffee Morning and a huge range of sporting fixtures to name but a few. It has been great to see our school community working so well together.

1. Academisation

I am very pleased to announce we will be converting to become an academy with the Creative Education Trust (CET) on the 1st November 2018. Thank you for your responses to the consultation. When we return after half term we will have a new logo, which you will see on the school building. We are looking forward to being part of the CET family of schools and benefitting from their excellent track record of school improvement.

2. Achievement

Year 11 and those year 10 groups who are taking their exam in the summer are preparing for this already. Staff are running after school revision sessions and a half term holiday school. It is essential that the students take up the opportunities on offer, are working in their own time and not just relying on what is covered in the lesson.

- Home learning

Students in all years should be receiving home learning via Google classroom or bringing home worksheets and revision guides. Getting into good habits early on is important. You can help by checking that home learning has been set (and challenging us where it hasn't!) and providing a suitable workspace at home.

- Student well-being

Is your child getting enough sleep? Research shows that the average amount of sleep that teenagers get is between 7 and 7.5 hours per night. However, they need between 9 and 9.5 hours. Much of the lack of sleep is down to time spent on social media or gaming. If possible, removing access to social media/games at bedtime and giving your child 'down time' before bed should help them sleep better - and for longer.

- Holiday school

A reminder that we are running our half term holiday school for year 10 and 11 students. Some of the sessions are 'drop-ins' and others are by invite only. Please look on our Facebook page and website for further details.

3. Basic expectations

As always at the start of term, we have promoted our high expectations of the basics - uniform, attendance, punctuality and equipment. These are all important if students are going to achieve well and make good progress. We thank the vast majority of you for supporting this.

- Attendance and punctuality

Our current attendance is 94.5%; this is just below our target of 95%. We have noticed that the attendance of some students - year 10 and Pupil Premium (those that have had Free School Meals in the last six years) is not as good as others. If you have a child in these groups, please make every effort to get them into school on time each day.

4. Behaviour

Behaviour is generally good around the school and much improved during break times. Students are taking responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe. Next half term we will be working on the following:

- Low level disruption

The big focus after half term will be on tackling low-level disruption in lessons. This is any behaviour that stops the teacher from teaching or the students from learning. It includes, arriving late to the lesson, chatting off task, not starting the work quickly, not following instructions first time. It is one of the biggest barriers to progress, as

many students do not see it as a problem. We will be working with the students to tackle this and informing you if your child is regularly involved in low-level disruption in lessons.

- **Phones and headphones**

You will be aware that we are having a clampdown on the use of mobile phones and headphones around school. These should not be seen, except at break time. Any student seen with a mobile phone or headphones at any other time will have the item confiscated and you will be asked to come into school to collect it.

5. **Black History Month**

We have been celebrating the contribution of Black people in the UK in a number of fields. This includes the artist, Chris Ofili Art, film director, Steve McQueen, scientist Maggie Aderin – Pocock, mathematician Katherine Okikiolu, historian David Ologusa and writer, Malorie Blackman. We also had a week of Black History assemblies and a tutor quiz.

6. **Core Values**

You will be familiar with our motto Be Your Best. We have been looking at some Core Values to underpin this, which we want our whole school community to follow. We have agreed that the Values below are the most important to us and reflect our school:

- **Equality** – give everyone the chance to belong, and to succeed
- **Integrity** – do the right thing, with passion and with purpose
- **Ambition** – aim high and work hard, now and for the future

We will be promoting these values across our school community over the next half term and would welcome your support in reinforcing these at home.

7. **Parents' Evenings**

It is important that we meet with you to discuss your child's progress. We provide at least one opportunity for a face-to-face meeting with your child's tutor or subject teacher every year. Further meetings can be set up on request. Below are the dates for the formal meetings with parents this year. If you would like to discuss your child's progress at any other time, please contact the relevant staff at school.

Year 7 – Thursday 18th October, 4-7pm
Year 8 – Thursday 22nd November, 4-7pm
Year 11 – Thursday 17th January, 4-7pm
Year 9 – Wednesday 6th March, 4-7pm
Year 8 options – Thursday 21st March, 5-7pm
Year 10 – Wednesday 19th June, 4-7pm
Year 7 – Thursday 11th July, 4-7pm

As half term approaches, I would like to wish you and your family a safe and enjoyable break and to thank you for your hard work in supporting the school at the start of this academic year. We look forward to working with you as we enter into the next exciting phase of development as part of the Creative Education Trust. Remember, school starts back on Monday 5th November, 8.45am on site - ready to start lessons at 8.50am.

With very best wishes,



Dr Sally Coulton
Headteacher

Headteacher. **Dr Sally Coulton**