

## HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

14<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Dear Parent/Carers,

I hope our families have been enjoying the (slightly warmer than average) autumnal weather over the first few weeks of this term. It looks like the weeks ahead will be slightly more true to the season! Today's letter is a bit operational so I thank you in advance for reading through it as there are some important updates and links.

**Mr Bridgeman, Vice Principal** – Unfortunately Mr Tucker, Principal of City Academy, is going to be absent from work for a few weeks following an operation. Mr Bridgeman will be adding capacity to the leadership team at City Academy as Acting Principal for a few weeks. Although we will miss Mr Bridgeman from the Academy he will be back with us shortly and we wish him all the best over the coming weeks.

**Children in Need** – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November (this coming Friday) is the annual Children in Need day. As is usual, we will be doing a non-uniform/pyjama day to raise funds for the charity. Students are welcome to wear their own clothes or suitable pyjamas for the day with a £1 suggested donation to CIN payable on arrival.

**Sickle Cell Wear Your Own Shoes** – our charity event last term raised £557.63 towards sickle cell research and treatment. Thank You to all students who supported with their donations.

**Vandalism and deliberate damage** – Unfortunately across the first term we saw a significant increase in deliberate damage and graffiti in the Academy. This is really uncommon at Bristol Met and it transpires there was a Tik Tok craze/challenge for young people to get likes/kudos for uploading videos of them deliberately damaging school property. As you can appreciate, pressure on funding in education is stretched as it is everywhere with increases to national insurance, gas, electric etc. I am hoping that the craze (as they always do) is passing. We would really appreciate the support of all families in talking to young people about the need to be respectful of property as every £1 we spend fixing deliberate damage is £1 less spent on core education and pastoral support of our community.

**Mobile Phone/EarPod/Electronic Devices** – linking in to the above, we have seen a rise in young people using their mobile phones on site which creates knock on concerns. Our published policy ([available at this link](#)) is that mobile phones, earphones and other electronic devices are to be switched off and stored securely in bags/lockers from entry through the front doors until exit back out at the end of the day. Any phones, earphones or electronic devices seen during the day will be confiscated and held until a parent/carer is able to collect from site. Please do take the opportunity to speak to young people to ensure there is no inconvenience to families in having to come to collect devices. We thank you in advance for your support. We will be reminding students this week.

**Parent/Carer Handbook** – just a reminder that we have a parent/carer handbook with useful information published on the website here [Parent/Carers Handbook 2022-2023 \(clf.uk\)](#)

It has an amount of useful information in it which may provide answers to some of the common questions we get and it also outlines our commitment to respond to any queries or requests we receive within 3 working days of receipt.

**Hot Desks at Vassall Centre** – we know that the pressures of cost of living increases will be challenging for many families over the coming winter period particularly for those who may now be working from home. The Vassall's Centre are offering free hot desk working spaces for anyone who works alone from home and lives in the BS16 area. These will be available on a Tuesday and Friday. Email [office@vassallcentre.org.uk](mailto:office@vassallcentre.org.uk) for further details.



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**Free School Meals (FSM) and Pupil Premium (PP):** we know that the pandemic will have been challenging financially for many families and we are entering a particularly difficult winter in regards cost of living. However, we also know that the number of families claiming free school meals has been dropping. We are therefore concerned that some families may not be claiming what they are entitled to or may not know that they are entitled to claim free school meals in the first instance. There is an obvious financial benefit to any family who qualifies for free school means as students get credit each day to spend in the canteen. Due to the cashless catering systems there is no identifying method for students publicly. In addition, for every student who is eligible and claiming FSM the Academy receives an additional amount of funding to spend on the wider education provision. This is called the Pupil Premium. There is therefore a financial benefit to us as well as families. We would therefore urge any family who is unsure, or knows they qualify but hasn't previously claimed, to consider applying for free school meals. It can be done online and the online system guides and gives a decision instantly on eligibility. The application can be found by clicking [this link](#). There is a wider information letter about FSM and PP which can be read here for those who want to [find out more](#).

Finally, there is additional funding available to education provisions to support the wider education of any children who have been previously in local authority care (PLAC). If you think this could apply to your child and wish to find out more about how this can support the Academy and your child(ren) then please read [this letter](#)

Best wishes for the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely

Cameron Shaw  
Principal