

HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS16th September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I sit writing this letter just as we finish our first full week cycle of lessons and just as it has been announced that we will shortly see a new Secretary of State for Education within the Government. I will try and keep this letter relatively short compared to some of my previous ones but wanted to bring a few updates at the end of this first week. However, before I do, I wanted to say a massive well done, congratulations and thank you to all of our students for the positive start to the new year despite the ongoing uncertainty in the wider world. In particular to our new intake of Year 7 who have made an amazing start and are now finding their way confidently around the Academy.

Covid, Measles, Mumps, Chickenpox & Shingles – Please may we ask for your co-operation in an important matter? One of our pupils is receiving medical treatment at Bristol Children’s Hospital which puts them at risk if exposed to the above viruses. It also includes slapped cheek and other viruses. If anyone in your house is diagnosed or suspected of having these viruses please would you let us know? We can then work with our student and their family for them to receive appropriate medical treatment/supervision. There is no risk to any of our students from this situation but the health of the student undergoing treatment does depend on the cooperation of our community. Many thanks in advance for your support.

Open Evening Monday 20th September – this coming Monday we are hosting our annual Open Evening for prospective Year 7 students. Last September we were not able to offer an in person visit due to Covid restrictions. We are therefore excited to be able to open our doors once again to families of those in Year 6. Clearly, against the backdrop of a pandemic which is far from over, we are still having to take a cautious approach to a return to “normal”. Tempting as I know it will be for some families please could I respectfully ask that families of current students who do not have a child in Year 6 do not use this opportunity to visit. I know some families have not yet been able to visit us in person due to restrictions and we are looking at being able to welcome and give an opportunity in person at the upcoming ‘Tutor Evening’. We would like to limit visitors this Monday to just those with students having to make that important choice of their next school in the coming weeks. I thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Lockers – I know many students (and families) are chomping at the bit to have use of a locker again. It is our intention to move back to the use of lockers but the issuing of a locker to each student will take us some weeks to carry out due to the number of master keys we have to enable the setting of the combination locks. We will be starting the process imminently and all students who wish to use a locker should have one issued to them by the end of this term. Thank you for your patience.

Lunch Service – There were a few teething problems on the first day or two (as there often is) with systems and staffing as we settled back into a new year, new intake of students and a return to a non-split lunch (which we had to introduce due to covid bubbling requirements). Service speed has really picked up and hopefully students are reporting a better experience across the last few days. Once again thank you for your patience

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Lateral Flow Testing – Currently the Government have requested that all students and school staff continue to test twice weekly until the end of September at which point they will advise further. Therefore please do encourage any student who is willing and able to continue to take twice weekly tests. From the on site testing we have seen that it does identify asymptomatic positive cases which, in turn, will assist in breaking chains of transmission. This in turn continues to better protect the most vulnerable in society and in turn pressures on the NHS will be ever more important as we approach the winter season. If at any time families run low of test kits please do get students to ask at Student Reception as we have stocks. We will continue to regularly give access for students to collect a new box until the Government instruct otherwise. As has always been the case, taking tests is optional but encouraged and appreciated in line with national guidance.

Vaccines – As I have mentioned previously, there is much ongoing speculation, debate, and media focus on the vaccination of children as part of the covid response. It has now been announced by the Government that secondary school children will be offered a single dose of a covid vaccine and that this would be done through schools for most students. As is the case with any vaccine offered on mass to children, schools are used as nothing more than a vaccination centre. How vaccines are administered and how parental consent is gained are medical decisions the remit of the NHS. Similarly, vaccines will always be administered by medically qualified personnel. I understand fully that not all families will wish their child to be vaccinated when it is offered and, as has been the case with adults, that will be absolutely a decision for individuals and families and not one that the Academy will have any involvement in. I have no further information to provide currently on the vaccine plans for children but will of course share anything provided to us in time. Everything I know is in the public domain. As has been the case the entire way through covid, schools are not informed in advance and instead receive the information at the same time as it is announced publicly. Thank you again for your understanding and patience as we await further information.

School Nurser Service Webinars – The school nurse service offers online webinars free to parents/carers. This booking page shows what is being offered in the near future and is worth checking regularly if you are interested in accessing these services [Sirona Webinar Team Events | Eventbrite](#)

Morrison's Vouchers – Morrison's Supermarket are running a "Good to Grow" campaign currently. They are offering free gardening equipment for schools. We now have a wildflower garden area, small allotment space and an 'EnvironMET' group overseen by Ms Lloyd. The group have large plans for future development and would love some new equipment. Given Morrison's is so local and that many of our families are likely to use it for their shopping we would love to take any of these vouchers off your hands. Please ask students to bring them in and put them in the box on Student Reception. Thank you in advance for helping us get lots of nice new things [It's Good to Grow - Morrisons Blog](#)

Until next time please enjoy the remnants of the Summer weather.

Best wishes,



Mr C Shaw
Principal