

16 December 2016

Dear Parents/Carers

I write to you at the end of a very busy term here at Outwood Academy Acklam. There has been lots going on here, particularly with year 11 students preparing for their final months of GCSEs when they return in January.

Praising Stars©

The Praising Stars© 2 reports give a positive picture for students – the effort grades being awarded by teachers suggest that students are working really hard in lessons and have a great attitude to learning. Your child's Praising Stars© 2 report is enclosed with this letter. We hope you find the time to discuss the report with your child. If you have any queries, please contact your child's learning manager. As usual, there will be a celebration for the students with the highest number of EIs.

Enrichment

The **enrichment programme** has been hugely successful so far this year, with huge numbers of students choosing to stay back from 2.30pm-3.30pm to take part in one of the many activities on offer. It has also been fantastic to see over 100 year 11s staying for extra lessons in mathematics and English on Mondays and Thursdays. Please do encourage your child to take part in an enrichment activity.

Attendance

Attendance at the academy this year is once again much improved. I would like to thank you for your support and for working with us to improve this. I would also like to say a big well done to our students. Attendance is absolutely vital to support the learning and attainment of your child. **Absence – for any reason – interferes with the learning and progress of students.** We continue to pursue parents and carers whose children have low attendance. Fines and prosecutions are issued where necessary.

Christmas Coffee Morning – Thank you!

Thank you for the huge amount of support for the coffee morning held on Saturday 10th December 2016. We raised in excess of £500 for Teesside Hospice. It was a brilliant event with a great festive atmosphere.

Coats and the weather

We are at that time of year where winter is set in and the weather is very unpredictable. Students need to be prepared and ensure that they wear a coat and suitable shoes in order to keep themselves warm and dry on their way to and from the academy. When students are not prepared, it is difficult for them to dry out in lessons. It is really important that they are prepared to start lessons in comfortable conditions.

Expectations

I would like to give parents and carers the following reminders of our expectations:

- We will continue not to allow extreme hairstyles and any dyed hair should be of a natural hair colour;
- Correct uniform should be worn in full at all times and failure to do so will result in students being issued with a C4. It should be noted that uniform should not be altered in any way (this includes altering trousers to a 'skinny fit' style);
- Shoes must be plain black and able to be polished;

- All students must attend the academy fully equipped. This includes a suitable bag, pen, pencil, ruler, eraser, calculator, PE kit and planner. We will be regularly checking that students have their equipment with them;
- I would also like to emphasise that smart watches are not allowed.

Important dates

There is a training day for teachers on Friday 17 February 2017. This means that students will finish for half term on Thursday 16 February 2017.

The options process Year 8 into Year 9

What	When
Student Assembly Option booklet and forms will be handed out during assembly	Tuesday 10 January 2017
Parent/Carer Information Evening	Tuesday 17 January 2017 5pm-7pm
Deadline for completion and submission of option choices is 9am on Friday 27 January 2017	

The options process Year 10 into Year 11

What	When
Student Assembly	Friday 16 December 2016
Individual Student Interviews (parents are also invited)	Friday 6 January – Friday 20 January 2017 Parents are welcome to come to their child's guided pathway interviews; invitations will be sent out in the new year. There will also be drop in sessions on Monday 9 and Monday 16 January between 5.30 – 6.30pm if you would like to discuss further.
Deadline for completion and submission of option choices is 9am on Friday 27 January 2017	

Merry Christmas

This term will end on Friday 16 December 2015 at 2.30pm. The academy will reopen on Tuesday 3 January 2017. Students are expected to arrive by 8.20am, as normal.

I would like to wish all parents, carers, students and their families a very restful Christmas and a happy and healthy 2017.

Yours faithfully

Mark Hassack
Principal