



23 October 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian

## **FIRST HALF TERM**

As we near the end of our very first half term, our whole school community can look back with pride on what has been achieved over the last seven weeks. A very busy summer meant that we were ready to open in our temporary, yet well-equipped and spacious buildings. Our enthusiastic and smartly dressed students quickly learnt the correct way into school and, in their very smart new uniforms, met their tutors and teachers. The all-important student planners were handed out, timetables distributed and the very first lessons taught. We were up and running.

A great deal has happened over the last seven weeks. In addition to the students beginning their regular timetabled studies we have had two special theme days. Our first was "E-Safety day" where we welcomed IT professionals from Intel and Bletchley Park to lead sessions on how to stay safe online, protecting your information, combatting cyber bullying and developing safe online habits. Our second special day was "Puzzle day", led by the Mathematics department. Students spent the day cracking codes, solving puzzles and exploring intriguing problems. These special days created a real buzz and were very well received by the students. More detailed reports about these days are on our website.

Other notable events of our first half term have included:

- A very busy Open Evening with 450-500 people visiting our school, many parents visited with children who are keen to join the school next year.
- Our Parental involvement evening where we were able to show you our current facilities, share updates on the permanent building and explore how parents can support the school.
- Our "Settling In" evening where parents had the opportunity to meet tutors and hear about the trips we are running to Tirabad.
- The start of a full programme of after-school activities and clubs.
- A very successful visit to a local Gurdwara to support students in their purple pathway Sikhism project.
- Positive TV, radio and newspaper reports about the opening of the school and on the enormous level of local support.
- The completion of the piling and foundation laying for our permanent building.

We have promised to deliver an outstanding education for your child. We have a highly qualified and skilled staff team committed to delivering an interesting, engaging and challenging curriculum that meets the needs of all our students. At our "Settling In" meeting, we were able to share with you our tried and tested approach to student target setting, how we track the progress students are making and how we will tell you about it. We have a culture of high expectations and achievement within a climate of warmth, acceptance and care; students look forward to school and want to learn. We were delighted that, just this week, a trained and experienced OFSTED inspector came to visit the school to observe lessons and meet the students. She was particularly complimentary about the quality of our teaching and the commitment and engagement of students in their lessons.

Our school will only continue to be a success if we all work together. In that spirit, I would like to ask for your help in the following matters:

**Traffic at the gate.** Please could we encourage you to be considerate and safety conscious when dropping off and picking up your child. We would respectfully ask that cars do not use the area immediately outside the entrance gate as a 'drop off/pick up' point. It is unsafe as there is a large volume of children crossing the road and moving through the gate. We would encourage as many students as possible to walk, ride their bike or utilise public transport. If you do need to drive to pick up or drop off your child, please would you park along Hamilton Road or Whiteknights Road. Parents are reminded that 'bumpy' Bulmershe Road is a private road where cars should not be driven.

**Uniform.** We are a uniform school and believe that correctly wearing a school uniform instils a sense of pride and supports our high standards of behaviour and conduct. Please could you ensure that your child wears the correct uniform, including shoes.

**Eating.** Students are able to have a snack during break time. This should be fruit or a cereal bar. Please do not send your child to school with crisps, chocolate or sweets.

**Attendance and Punctuality.** In order for students to learn and make progress, they must be in school. Please may we remind parents to contact the school to inform us of any student absence. Following any absence due to illness, students should bring in a letter, signed by a parent or carer, explaining the reason for their absence.

Please note that any absences for any other reason requires the permission of the school in advance. The absence request form is now on the website for your convenience. Please note that legally we are unable to grant permission for student absence unless it is for exceptional circumstances. Our policy about attendance (part of the behaviour and attendance policy) is published on the school website. Parents are reminded that the school day begins at 8.40am and students should arrive to school between 8.30-8.40am

**Lost property.** Inevitably we are starting to collect a number of items of lost property. Please could you ensure that all items of clothing (including PE kit and Lab coats) are clearly labelled with your child's name. This will aid our office staff immensely.

Finally, as we head into the half term break, we would like to remind parents that the school will be closed for a staff training day on **Wednesday 11 November**.

Wishing you a restful break for the half term.

Yours sincerely



Dr P Thomas  
Headteacher



Mr A Johnson  
Assistant Headteacher