



21 October 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

End of first half term – October 2016

We are writing to update you on a number of matters and to celebrate a very successful first half term of the academic year.

Learning, progress and the first data report

Our students have settled in very well to the new school year. Despite the challenges of moving between our temporary classrooms, learning and teaching has been of our usual high quality and our students have made good progress in acquiring knowledge and developing skills. In the first week after half term we will report to you, via the Learning Gateway, the current attainment and student effort grades in each of your child's subjects.

Extra-curricular opportunities and school trips

A feature of our first half term has been the launch of a number of new extra-curricular activities. Mrs Roberts, Head of PE and extra-curricular co-ordinator has been working hard to ensure that we have a range and variety of after school clubs and societies. The recent purchase of a school minibus and the growth of our PE team means that we have been able to take part in competitive fixtures. We are particularly delighted that our Year 8 boys' rugby team has been so successful and is now in the regional play offs having beaten a number of very 'established' local state and private schools along the way. When further facilities become available to us after half term, new after school clubs and activities will be introduced.

New building update

We are delighted to report that the handover of the front half of our new building is on schedule. Over the half term break, contractors will be finishing off the exterior and interior works and our equipment and resources will be moved from temporary classrooms to their new homes. On Monday 31 October the school will have access to the permanent building and our staff team will be busy unpacking and setting up learning spaces, offices and other areas. They will also receive briefings and training about our new routines and systems necessary for a new school building. Please remember therefore that **school will be closed to students on Monday 31 October**.

The remainder of the building will be handed over to the school in the last week of November. We will be planning tours for parents to see our new facilities before the end of term; we will let you know about this in due course.

Tuesday 1 November

In order for us to introduce the new school building to our students, we will have a delayed start to school on Tuesday 1 November. Students should not arrive at school before 10.00am. At that time they will be given new timetables, tour the building and receive important briefings (e.g. our fire evacuation arrangements). Normal lessons will be taught from lesson 3 onwards and students should bring all of their books and equipment for lesson 3 (week 2). **Please note the later start time on 1 November.**

Access to the school

From 1 November students should enter the school via Crescent Road. The Hamilton Road entrance will no longer be used by students. Until we have possession of the whole building, students will enter through the gate to the right of the school and will use the community entrance. They will be invited into school in the normal way just before 8.40am. Students may arrive and wait in the school grounds (to the right of the school building) from 8.25am where they will be supervised. Students should not arrive at school any earlier than this. A bike storage area (twice the size of the current area) has been installed and we encourage students to ride their bikes to school. As many of you know, Crescent Road is a busy road and space to drop students off is very limited. Please could I ask parents to drop students a few minutes away from the school so that they complete their journey on foot.

Any parent or other visitor to the school must always go to our new reception at the front of the school on Crescent Road.

Uniform

The half term holiday offers an opportunity for students to ensure that their uniform and appearance is appropriate and Mrs James has asked all of our students to do this. Please could you ensure that your child has the correct uniform. We have noticed that some students are not wearing the correct shoes and, occasionally, incorrectly coloured trousers, skirts and tights. Some retailers promote certain styles of black trainer as "school shoes"; we do not consider these appropriate. Please also note that students are expected to wear both a blazer and a school jumper. Our uniform list is in the student planner and on our website. Please could we also urge parents to ensure that their child does not have an inappropriate haircut over the break. Hair should not be cut any shorter than a Grade 2, and students should not have an extreme or fashion haircut.

As we move towards the next exciting phase of our school's development may we take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and to wish you a restful half term break.

Yours sincerely



Dr P Thomas
Headteacher



Mr A Johnson
Deputy Headteacher