21 December 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

What an exciting term we have had once again at the Academy! Our students continue to impress me with their diligent and enthusiastic attitude to their studies. Staff at the Academy continue to work tirelessly and passionately to ensure that our young people achieve both academically and have the opportunities to participate in the wider Academy life. I am really pleased to share with you in this update, the plethora of events that have taken place and the exciting developments that are currently underway and planned for the future.

**Primary Transition**

Maintaining strong working relationships with our Primary Partnership schools is very important to us. We have once again commenced our IPad work with our primary schools, indeed, Trentham Academy staff have been working with the children at Oak Hill Primary Academy to support them in developing a fantastic array of storytelling IPad clips. Their creativity and innovation has been lovely to see. Several of our Year 7 students were invited back to Ash Green Primary Academy to celebrate their excellent SATs results and their continued hard work at our Academy. It was wonderful to see these students in the Evening Sentinel. Our primary colleagues were so pleased to receive letters from all of our Year 7 students, letting them know how they are progressing in their first term at Trentham Academy. We have many more exciting ventures planned with our primary schools in the New Year including Modern Foreign Languages and Science clubs with Oakhill Primary School, Priory C of E Primary Academy, St Joseph’s Preparatory School, Belgrave St Bartholomew’s Academy and Ash Green Primary Academy. We always thoroughly enjoy working with our primary colleagues and their students.

**Sporting Success**

Our sporting achievements continue to grow and I am so proud of how hard our students work and the loyalty they show to the Academy. I am also extremely thankful to the staff in the PE department for their hard work and continued commitment to ensuring that we have a vast range of extra-curricular activities on offer. I am absolutely thrilled to inform you that we are the U15s Boys’ Basketball City Champions and that our Year 8 boys’ football team have reached the semi-final of the City Cup. We have also been successful in athletics with our Year 8 boys and girls placing second. Our U13s netball team played so well and tried so hard to reach the final of the City Netball Competition and narrowly missed out on first place. Our rugby reputation continues to grow, building on the success of Year 8 who are County Champions. Indeed, our Year 7s are proving to be a formidable team as they are still undefeated this school year. Well done to all the students who have contributed to such fantastic results and thanks to all parents and carers who continue to support our young people, often on freezing cold and dark nights! Your support is much appreciated.

**GCSE Pod and Resources**

As year 9, 10 and 11 students are now well under way with their GCSE courses, I thought it an opportune time to remind you about GCSE Pod. This is a fantastic resource that we have available for our students through Firefly. GCSE Pod is a collection of short video tutorials and questions that relate to all subjects taught at the Academy. It will really help and support your child in their revision by deepening their understanding of a topic area. To access this please click on the link below:

* <http://trentham.fireflycloud.net/dashboard>
* Click resources > GCSE Pod > Podcast Resources
* Click the GCSE Pod ‘Visit GCSE Pod now’
* Choose ‘My Courses’ to see list of subjects and find videos

In the New Year we will add to Firefly a list of useful websites, hints and tips to help you support your child with their learning at home.

**Academy Site Developments**

I am pleased to inform you that work started on the Trentham Community Learning Centre (TCLC) in October. The TCLC will be a fantastic resource that can be used by both our local community and our students. It is due to be completed in April 2019. Please keep a close eye on the Academy website for regular updates.   
  
After a lot of work and much persistence, we have finally sourced support to replace the front gate and barrier system. The new gate system will be fitted during February half-term 2019 and will increase the safety and security of the site for staff and students.   
  
Can I please remind parents/carers that for the safety of our students there is no “pick up” or “drop off” availability on the Academy car park, unless it has been authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Parking is available in our local community but, please show consideration to our local residents and to each other. Please do not drop off or pick up your child on Hanford Health Care Centre car park as this restricts patient access.

**Uniform Update**

Following the drive to improve uniform standards at the start of this academic year it is pleasing to see that the majority of students look incredibly smart and are wearing the correct uniform with great pride. I would like to thank both students and parents/carers for your ongoing support with this matter.

Could I please remind you that shoes must be plain black leather, formal dress style with a raised heal. Shoes must be polishable and have no visible logos. The heals and the shoe design must conform to basic health and safety requirements for a school setting. Trainer style shoes, *regardless of the retailer* *description,* and canvas or fabric shoes are not allowed. For clarity you will find attached to this email a uniform guidance sheet. The governing body have requested that I remain the arbiter when deciding whether a pair of shoes conforms with the Academy policy. If you are in any doubt please contact the Academy for clarification.  
  
I would also like to take this opportunity to remind parent/carers of students in Years 8 – 10 that Trentham Academy official trousers must be worn by students as of 8 January 2019; we have given parents the opportunity to adjust to the change over the last 6 months. These trousers are available from the local school uniform shops. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in your child being isolated from the general student population until the matter is resolved. If you do have any queries please do not hesitate to make contact the Academy.

Hair and Beauty: Please see Academy Dress Code (*attached to this email*) for more information and guidance

* **No** extreme hairstyles or colours are permitted.  Hairstyles must be plain and practical for school. No extremes of fashion are permitted including:  
  - steps  
  - lines  
  - shaved styles  
  - elaborate braiding  
  - non-natural hair colouring or streaking

The Governors expect the Headteacher to be the arbiter of what constitutes an extreme of fashion.

* Discreet make-up may be worn, but students will be asked to remove it if it is deemed excessive.  Make-up should remain **natural** in tone and look.  Again, the Governors expect the Headteacher to be the arbiter of what constitutes an acceptable tone.

**Staffing Update**

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that Mrs Kirk is leaving at Christmas to take up a position in a school that is closer to home. We wish her the best of luck for the future. Mr Butcher, Mrs Hazel and Mr Taylor have recently joined us at the Academy. All are highly experienced teachers with Mr Butcher being a very keen and exceptionally talented musician, Mrs Hazel being a specialist in Business and Computing and Mr Taylor leading on the inclusion/behaviour strategy in the Academy. Our new staff have been warmly welcomed into the Academy community.

**Christmas Concert**

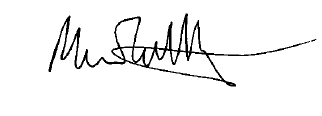
What a wonderful evening we had on Wednesday night! Our annual Christmas Concert was fantastic and a complete sell out! Parents, carers and members of our community enjoyed a drop of mulled wine (*alcohol free of course!*) and a mince pie before experiencing a real spectacle of outstanding performances. Many thanks to Priory C of E Academy staff and students who also joined us on the evening and performed a wonderful array of songs. I would like to thank in particular the staff and students who helped bring this event together as well as our amazing student performers.   
  
**Community Christmas Dinner**On Thursday, 20 December we welcomed a number of local residents to our Community Christmas Dinner. They had the opportunity to sing carols and Christmas songs with students and to listen to a selection of performances from the previous evening’s Christmas concert. A traditional Christmas dinner was served by prefects and much fun was had by all We very much hope to repeat this event next year.

Thank you for your ongoing support and the positive feedback that I receive regularly.

I wish you and your families an enjoyable, safe and restful Christmas break and a prosperous New Year.

I look forward to seeing the students return to school on **Tuesday, 8 January**.

Yours sincerely

  
**Mike Whittingham  
Headteacher**

**Encs**