

28 June 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

As we fast approach the summer holiday, I write with regards some slight changes to the school day from the start of next year and further details to enhance our 'Standards for Success'. We formally joined the Maltby Learning Trust on 1 April 2019 and, together with the new appointment of Mr Dale Jackson as Executive Principal at Wath from 1 September, we are looking forward to the next academic year and continuing the exciting journey of further school improvement; committing to many new ways of working both inside and outside the classroom.

Next year we will continue with two lessons between tutor time and mid-morning break, but then have two further lessons between break and lunch, and one lesson in the afternoon. This will provide kitchen staff with time to adequately prepare for lunch servings after their very popular break time menu. The afternoon session will start at 1:40 pm, which will mean it will end at 2:40 pm. We will have a variety of serveries at lunchtime for students to purchase a lunch. In addition, we will continue to have a variety of other options for students to eat their own lunch, such as that brought from home. We are continuing to look at a variety of further updates to our facilities for sixth form students which will include further options for having lunch in their own areas rather than the need to use the main dining room.

The additional time at the end of the school day will provide the school with further opportunities for the richly varied extra-curricular diet we already offer for students, especially in winter with the shortened amount of light. We are also conscious as a school that we are now attracting more students, from a much wider catchment area than ever before, and we need to ensure that students have the opportunity to get home safely.

I am delighted to report that the number of instances of disruptive behaviour in lessons has halved this academic year. However all of our detentions will continue to be after school and these will continue to be up to an hour in length. It is very pleasing that the greater immediacy of our detention system is having a very positive impact in following up issues rapidly. Attendance has shown a three year trend of improvement and we now exceed the national average. The punctuality of students to sessions and lessons have also both significantly improved this year. This has been positively reinforced by our same day detentions for lates at the start of the day. This will continue to remain a focus – it is vital that we get students into the habit of arriving on time in preparation for their life beyond school.

As we have now become part of Maltby Learning Trust, this is an appropriate time for the school to look again at its uniform policy. I am sure parents will agree that it is very important to students that we are consistent in our application of the uniform policy. To that end, we have improved the clarity of the detail in the policy, a copy of which is enclosed with this letter. I would appreciate your full support in ensuring your child is dressed appropriately for their return in September. To help ensure this consistency, there will be a single point of entry for all students on their return to school. Staff will be on duty to direct students to this single point of entry so that we can check uniform on arrival. Any student who does not meet the requirements of the updated uniform policy will be required to go home and change, or change into one of the spare items of uniform that the school will provide for the day. If this is fully addressed in advance it will avoid issues arising on the first day of the new year.

Over the next few weeks your child will attend an assembly to support them to understand the changes that will be made to our continued work towards our standards for success. We have spent a significant amount of time reviewing other schools locally and nationally, and how they have addressed uniform, behaviour and standards. We believe that, by making small changes to our existing systems for September, we are best placed to further support our students to be successful learners.

Outlined below are some key elements of our 'Standards for Success' from September:

1. We are committed to recognising students who go 'above and beyond' in terms of their learning, through a process of positive recognition. Students will be awarded E-praise points for going 'above and beyond' in lessons and around the school. In addition, we will communicate with parents on a regular basis when we believe students deserve recognition.
2. We are committed to further reviewing our existing rewards programme with students from September, to ensure it is fit for purpose and acts as a continued motivator for effective learning. As such, student voice panels will expand when we return in September to explore potential further developments in this area.
3. It is our expectation that all students will come to school each day fully prepared for learning: this will include having all the correct equipment, including the school planner.
4. We have reviewed our uniform policy and we have been very specific in our descriptions to ensure parents are supported to make the correct purchases over the summer period. We appreciate how stressful this can be and want to ensure that students begin the year with the correct uniform and footwear. I would particularly draw your attention to the sections on skirts, trousers and overall appearance, including such as make-up, nails and hair.
5. All students in September will be provided with a lanyard and ID badge that they will be required to wear at all times. This will increase still further the safety of all our students.

Thank you in anticipation for your support in relation to these continued improvements. We believe that by making these changes we can support teachers and students to engage in conversations that focus upon learning and progress, and not compliance with standards, that in most schools and workplaces are basic expectations.

End of Term Arrangements (Friday 19 July 2019)

The school will close for students on Friday 19 July at the usual time of 2:45 pm.

First Day Arrangements (Tuesday 3 September 2019)

The school will open to new Year 7 students on Tuesday 3 September at 8:20 am. All Year 7 students will meet in the same area as they did when they arrived for their induction days - the playground at the back of the school, located between the dining area and youth centre.

Students in Years 8 - 11 and Year 13 should arrive at 9:50 am and go to their tutor bases at the beginning of period 2. We would ask that you ensure that your son/daughter does not arrive on site before 9:45 am. Students in Year 12 should arrive at school for 8:25 am.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of the school as we work together to ensure the best education for all of our students, both now and in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Taylor
Headteacher