



**LODGE PARK
ACADEMY**

Broadening Horizons



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Executive Principal
Meena Wood

3 April 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

Re Principal's Update

I am writing to update you on developments at Lodge Park Academy as we approach the end of the six weeks since I began my post as Executive Principal at the Academy.

Given the significant changes in leadership over the last two years, the pace of improvement in our children's learning behaviours and well-being has not been as rapid or consistent as we would have liked. During the last six weeks I have identified what needs improving and together with the staff have implemented a series of changes in systems that relate to our Academy priorities. This is now resulting in green shoots for the academic achievements, behaviours and well-being of our children. I am pleased to report that as a consequence we have had very positive feedback from our children and their parents/carers.

The main changes are as follows:

1. The Positive Behaviours Policy:

This will be uploaded on our website by **16 April 2018**. In summary, we are ensuring that our children take greater responsibility for their learning and behaviours in keeping with **our values**. We would like our students to be ambassadors of good behaviours and leaders of their learning.

Respect: for the rule of law, for one another, for all adults and for our Academy environment and our local community.

Resilience in learning: turning a negative into a positive and achieving full potential in learning and qualifications.

Tolerance: zero-tolerance of poor behaviours including bullying, use of verbally offensive language (swear words) and disruptive silly behaviours in lessons and around the Academy.

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At the heart of our policy is the **Home Academy Contract**. This is built on a partnership between us, our children, and yourselves as their parents or carers. If your child does not show respectful behaviours, has a poor attitude to learning, has low attendance or poor punctuality, we will invite you in to work with us on the targets in the contract. We support our children to achieve their full potential and request that they respect the Academy's codes of behaviour and standards of learning. We believe in reforming poor behaviours and rewarding good behaviours. We have therefore implemented Lodge Park community service, depending on the offence. This might include litter picking in our Academy. In all cases, where a student has offended, he or she will be required to write a letter of apology. These strategies are proven to be more effective nationally than detention.

2. Assessment and feedback:

We are now ensuring that all students are given written feedback on their work, in every subject that will help them to make the progress they should. This is still inconsistent across the subjects but as an Academy we are closely working with all our teachers to ensure that the regular feedback they give will help our children make the progress they should. **Examples of written feedback that makes a difference to children's learning are on our website.**

3. Show My Homework:

There is now a policy of regular homework so that our children extend and consolidate their learning at home. As this web-based process may not always work effectively, I have requested all staff to ensure that students note their homework in their planner. Please encourage them to do their homework. The **homework requirements are on our website.**

4. Literacy DEAR:

Drop Everything and Read (DEAR). Reading is a vital skill for all children so that they are successful in all their subjects and improve their writing, spelling and speaking skills. We have introduced DEAR during the first ten minutes of form time. Please make sure that your child has a reading book and uses the library regularly. Asking your son/daughter to discuss with you what he/she is reading will encourage him/her and increase the number of books read.

During form time, 8.40-9.10am, our Sixth Formers have volunteered as mentors and reading buddies for our younger students. If your child has been invited to work with a Sixth Form reading buddy please question him/her about this and if you would like your child to be part of this scheme please contact my PA Miss Turbett.

5. Displays around the Academy building:

We have displayed our students' work around the Academy. These are very impressive, indicative of the talent we have and inspirational for all our students, staff and visitors. **Please go onto our website and see examples of these.**

6. Staffing:

Sadly, when I arrived a number of vacancies had not been filled especially in Science, Maths and Geography. This has meant high levels of cover teachers for our children, and in some cases, the quality of the teaching has not led to positive engagement in learning and there has been a decline in good behaviours.

However, I am pleased to report that we have had a strong recruitment drive and are welcoming new staff commencing in the summer term and September.

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7. Additional support/ intervention:

Through the latest assessment tests, we have identified the children who have gaps in their learning and who need greater consolidation and challenge in Years 11, 10 and 9 and have established additional support in English, Maths and Science from **17 April 2018**. I know this will be greatly valued by those children who have requested this.

I will be sharing further details separately of this and additional support offered to Years 7 and 8.

For parents of **Year 11 please do not forget that intervention for your children will be taking place 3-13 April. The timetable is on the website. During the Easter holidays we will be sending your daughter/son reminders and texts of encouragement via PS Engage so please do pass our messages on.**

8. Safeguarding /Health and Safety:

We have now ensured more rigorous checks to a much higher standard and discussed with students the dangers inherent in handling equipment and dangerous substances in the practical subjects. Please be assured that the vast majority of students are very well behaved and conduct themselves responsibly and safely.

9. Reminders on attendance, punctuality and uniform:

We expect a minimum of 95% attendance, good punctuality in the morning to school. Students must be on site by 8.35am at the latest as they need to be in form by 8.40am please - otherwise they are registered as late and a call will be made home.

The vast majority of our students are well presented, take pride in their uniform and look smart. They are a credit to Lodge Park Academy. A reminder please that leggings and tight trousers, make up and jewellery and trainers are not allowed. All students need to wear a blazer and tie. The sanction for inappropriate uniform is half hour detention after school – same day.

10. Parent/carers Forum:

We are setting up a parental forum and I would like to use this opportunity to discuss with you the vision for the Academy and most importantly to listen to your views. There will be a tab on the website where all the documentation will be uploaded for you to view.

The 'Mufti' fundraising event provoked a range of positive and negative responses from parents. I apologise for any misunderstanding that may have arisen through the text message that was sent in error.

Moving forward, I believe that it is important for us to have a common understanding on the purpose of the 'Mufti' day and the "15 minute detention". The purpose of allowing children to wear their own clothes and donate money to a charitable cause is common place in all schools in line with a bring and buy cake sale, Red Nose Day, running a marathon or any other such event. Wearing non-uniform for charity was optional and the donation could have been as little as ten pence and as much as a pound.

In line with our values of respect for the environment – and in speaking with our children in assemblies, they are keen to support an environmental charity and raise funds.

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My letter explained clearly that the detention of 15 minutes was only for those students who did not inform their tutor in advance that they were coming in non-uniform and did not wish to contribute to the charity.

This is promoting our value of respect and fairness for a whole Academy community event where the vast majority of students and parents are happy to contribute.

Keeping children in after school for 15 minutes was intended to allow time for students to reflect positively and discuss actions they could take to contribute to an environmental cause as they did not wish to, or could not make a small donation. Raising this social awareness is part of the National Curriculum and our British Values promoted by the government.

Moving forward I am so pleased that this week five very enthusiastic Yr 7 students have volunteered to present an assembly on the theme of *how we can raise funds for an environmental charity and why this is so important*.

This and other assemblies conducted by our children will be shared on our website.

Late Opening on Monday 16 April 2018 for Staff Development – 9.30am

We are continuously training our staff on improving the educational outcomes and welfare of our students. Therefore, we will be opening the Academy at 9.30am on Monday 16 April to give staff this opportunity. Students will go to their tutor form room at 9.40am where they will remain until 10.10am and then proceed to their second lesson of the day. If you have any queries regarding this late opening, please do get back to my PA.

I will be contacting you after the Easter break with a time of the first meeting of the parental forum where I would like us to share ideas as to how we continue to make Lodge Park Academy a great school.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Wood
Executive Principal

