



MELBOURN
VILLAGE COLLEGE
EVERYBODY IS SOMEBODY

An Academy of



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Dear Parents/ Carers

We are already approaching the end of mid half-term with Year 11 students well over half-way through their year and all other students now into the second half of the school year. All before the end of January.

I am really proud of the work completed by our staff and students who continually demonstrate the positive impact of effective working relationships. I am heartened when I visit classrooms as I can see the benefits of mutual respect coupled with the determination of students to learn. This is why the school has joined the 'Attendance Hub' programme developed by the Department for Education. We work partially with parents and external agencies to support parents and students to address issues which are preventing a student from regularly coming to school. If a young person does not attend school, how can they benefit from the experience of, making friends, taking part in new events (with support) the trials and tribulations that being at school will bring? After all, we do need to learn how to be part of a wider society and of course embark on academic learning.

Any new strategies that are recommended, we will of course implement, as I want to work with our parents. Yes, there is the punitive course of action – reminder letters, penalty notices, court action etc, but my preference is to work together for the benefit of all young people. This is why I am really pleased that our Trust has employed its own Family Mentor who will work with identified families supporting them to improve the attendance of their children.

Positive behaviour at school is obviously important. Through our tracking of students' behaviour choices, it is apparent that defiance is amongst the most common negative behaviour experienced by staff. Parents expect their child to learn at school, students expect to learn at school and staff expect the students to learn. If your child is defiant, you will be contacted by the school and may be asked to support us with our work. Obviously, when school staff and parents work positively together there is a significant change for the school in the behaviour choices of the student. Please do not be offended if we contact you, after all we want the same as you, to support our young people to become "successful adults of the future".

We have many supportive parents who conduct themselves exemplarily whilst on our school site. We are all role models, even if just dropping off a forgotten PE kit. Unnervingly, last term was a unique experience for myself and staff. Never before, have we had to deal with so many rude (i.e. swearing), physically aggressive (including violence) or intimidating parents with the police being contacted to provide support on one occasion. This I find impossible to understand. We want to work with parents which is made more difficult if I have to ban any parents from visiting or speaking to our staff. Please support us in our work.



Teaching – is at the core of our practice. We continue to strive to enhance the effectiveness of our teaching practices. One current area of development is through further adapting our teaching of students with an EHCP. Information regarding the individual needs of students is available to our staff, and this enables our colleagues to further adapt their teaching methods to support individual students. This may be through checking on their progress more frequently in lessons, asking specific questions or implementing TA's to support a particular student in individual circumstances. This is an area of development, which will grow in effectiveness over time.

I am really pleased with the literacy intervention programme (Lexonik) that we have introduced. The results to date with our first trial groups have been startling. Note: this is not about teaching students who cannot read e.g. new entries into the country, but those whose reading age falls behind that of their chronological age. To support our work, we test all students' reading age every year. The programme is important, as I believe we need to ensure all students have a reading age of 15 years by the time, they sit their final examinations in Year 11. Parents of students who are involved in this programme will be contacted.

The 'Duke of Edinburgh' award is running again with the aspiration that all students who started the award, but their process has stalled, will be given the opportunity to complete it this academic year. All appropriate parents should have been contacted, but if you have not been, please contact Mrs A Powell (APowell@stpetershuntingdon.org).

We are developing our SEND team to provide further support for our students and staff. One strategy is through the identification of students who require particular access arrangements for the external examinations. Currently, the focus has been on Year 11 students, however, this is now shifting with the focus being on us identifying students earlier. This can be achieved by providing extra time in Years 9 and 10, as this will increase the students receiving appropriate additional support, for example: coursework, which students may not have had previous access to.

Further changes will be affecting our uniform for Years 7-10 from this September. The black skirt will be removed from our list of uniform items and is replaced with a blue tartan one. I will not ask next years, Year 11 parents to replace their child's black skirt for just Year 11 as I know this will financially disadvantage some families.

Also, to note: our school day will be changing. As a school, the Department for Education expects us to be open to students for 32.5 hours per week. Currently we are open for 31.25. This means the length of the school day must increase by 15-minutes per day from September 2024. We have worked with bus companies who are the limiting factor as to whether or not the 15-minutes are added at the start of the day or the end of the current school day. Due to this limiting factor i.e. the availability of buses, the school be open at 8.30am and finish at 3.00pm from 1st September 2024.

I thank all parents/carers for your continued support.

Mr C Bennet
Executive Head Teacher