

06 September 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

I trust everyone has had a safe and enjoyable summer break, and I look forward to speaking with students about their experiences and holidays. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all back to the new academic year, one which I am full of optimism for, for all our students.

I am ambitious for Fairfax and passionate about ensuring your children's futures are both safe and successful at Fairfax and beyond. I will look forward to working with you to move the Academy forward.

Change to communications

Communications from the Academy are due to change this year as we move our information management systems from SIMS to Bromcom. Parents currently accessing the SIMS parent app will therefore not have accurate or up-to-date information. Parental access to Bromcom will follow in due course and we will endeavour to send out relevant information as soon as possible.

As we start the new term, to ensure that we all work together in a positive and productive manner, there are some changes I would like to make you aware of:

School uniform

A reminder that students in Years 8-13 will be expected to wear school shoes from January 2023. New Year 7 students will start school in shoes this term and I thank you for your anticipated support with this change. With regards to uniform, I have visited local community centres and shops who have Fairfax uniform that has been kindly donated by parents/carers. Contact details are as follows: Second Thoughts Charity Shop 0121 311 2892 and Falcon Lodge Community Hub 0121 748 8111.

Amendments to detentions

In the past, a student receiving multiple detentions on one day, would serve these detentions over a number of days. I believe this takes away the opportunity for restorative conversations and a fresh start the following day. As such multiple detentions issued on 1 day will result in longer detentions. 1 detention = 30 minutes, 2 detentions = 45 minutes and 3+ detentions = 60 minutes. All detentions issued after lunch, however, will still carry forward to the next day, and students who make the wrong choice and abscond detention, will of course sit an extended one the following day. Hopefully your child will embrace our ARKS values of Ambition, Respect, Kindness and Safety and these measures will not be applicable to them. This system will take effect once Bromcom, has been implemented.

Celebration of ARKS and school life

To celebrate students embracing our ARKS values, I am introducing Feel Good Friday phone calls. All staff members will be asked to select a minimum of one student that has excelled in displaying our core ARKS values, with a phone call home to share the good news. Ending the week on a positive is a good thing, and a phone call from school is always nice to receive. In addition to

these phone calls, parents/carers will receive regular communication from Heads of Year and Faculties. Heads of Year will be writing to you separately this week to inform you of key information and events relevant to your child's year group, and will make regular contact throughout the year. Each Faculty is also setting up Twitter accounts where they will share student work and positive news stories for you to follow and see the school in action.

I will also be sharing a weekly Principal's post on my Fairfax Twitter account; where each Friday I will summarise the week and show some excellent work that students have produced. There will also be notifications of any upcoming key events. Please can I encourage you to follow these accounts to stay in touch with events in school. Details of Twitter accounts will be sent out later this week.

Behaviour expectations

Key information for the new term will be shared with students in assemblies. Expectations of behaviour is a focus, both in and out of the classroom. I will be discussing with students the importance of good behaviour in classrooms and around school, and their responsibility to be polite and respectful to staff and each other. In addition, I will discuss littering and vandalism of school site, as last year we saw an increase in these types of incidents. There will be zero tolerance to vandalism and I trust I have your support on this matter as per the parent/student school agreement.

As a society we encourage people to keep areas clean and tidy, these values will be enforced in school premises too, with litter in bins and canteen areas cleared when students leave after eating. I will be focusing on the importance of respecting the environment both in school and in the wider local community. Students found littering will be required to litter pick as a sanction to keep the school premises clean and tidy. Again, I trust I have your support on this, as it is important our students understand the importance of respecting their environment. We are educating our students to make progress academically yes, but to also be respectful young adults, who contribute positively to society.

Fairfax will be holding a number of coffee mornings later this month in support of Macmillan, which will allow me the chance to meet parents/carers and provide an opportunity to discuss the building of a successful partnership. Details of these dates will follow shortly from Mrs Williams.

I am really looking forward to getting to know our wonderful students and their families.

Yours sincerely

SEAN CASTLE
Principal