

04 September 2023

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 fills me with optimism for all our students and the wider community.

As I have communicated throughout my first year, I am ambitious for Fairfax and passionate about ensuring your children's futures are both safe and successful at Fairfax and beyond.

As we start the new term, to ensure that we all work together in a positive and productive manner, there are some updates and changes to school routines I would like to make you aware of, most of which have already been communicated in my summer letters.

Reminders

All students should be in full school uniform when they return this week and a reminder that trainers are not allowed. With regards to uniform, I have visited local community centres and shops who have Fairfax uniform that has been kindly donated by parents/carers. Their contact details are: Second Thoughts Charity Shop 0121 311 2892 and Falcon Lodge Community Hub 0121 748 8111.

Our 'Punctuality Drive' continues; students need to be on site ready for an 8:30am start.

New Toilet Facilities.

Our main toilet facilities have received a full refurbishment (the results can be seen on our website and my Twitter account). It goes without saying that we must look after these new facilities and vandalism of any sort will result in immediate sanctions. Listening to feedback from parents/carers and our student body, we have made the decision to move to year group allocated toilets, so that students are with other children of a similar age. This will help any students who are currently anxious when using the facilities due to the presence of older students. The new toilet allocations are shown below:

Year Group	Area
Years 7 and 8	New toilets – located in corridor next to main hall (Separate boys and girls)
Years 9 and 10	New toilets – located in corridor next to main hall (Separate boys and girls)
Year 11 Boys	Boys toilets – located next to PE and IT offices (exclusively for Year 11 Boys)
Year 11 Girls	Girls toilets – located next to the Refectory (exclusively for Year 11 Girls)
Sixth Form	Sixth Form Centre and G block

Separate toilets for Year 11 will allow for further independence and although they will not have access to the new facilities, they will have clean and modern toilets that have not had much use in recent years.

Students with medical passes will be exempt and can use the nearest facilities.

In addition to the new toilets, we have lots of updated facilities and resources within school. From The Hub (our own on-site Behaviour Mentoring building) to two new ICT suites, new wall paint and landscaping. The Fairfax site is now looking good. We encourage students to keep it this way and to respect their environment as we move through the school year.

Snake queue for break and lunchtime access to Refectory.

Again, having listened to both the parent/carers community and our students, we will be staggering the entry times at break and lunch for our students into the snake queue. This we hope will allow younger, smaller students more space and freedom within the queue, whilst keeping a smooth flow of traffic. Students will be expected to enter the snake queue at the following times and will not be allowed in until their year group is called. These times will change throughout the year to allow different year groups in first.

	Time at break to enter snake queue	Time at lunch to enter snake queue
Years 7 and 8	11:00	13:25
Years 9 and 10	11:05	13:30
Year 11	11:10	13:35

Information on new break/lunch club timetables will be sent out later this week and we will be sharing these with students in assemblies this week.

Behaviour Curriculum and Routines for Learning.

A key theme of staff training, and my assemblies this week, is our behaviour curriculum, how we behave and why it's important to behave that way. We officially launch the 'Fairfax Way', which is how we do things at Fairfax. Staff will be consistent and fair in approach, and students need to understand how to behave in all scenarios in school, from walking around the site, to entering classrooms and eating in the Refectory. Staff are encouraged to praise through ARKS all students exemplifying the Fairfax Way.



We will continue our drive for positive reinforcement and framing within school, and the importance of fresh starts. We continue to celebrate students embracing our ARKS values, with Feel Good Friday phone calls and lots of House recognition. Please encourage your children to sew any badges they have received onto their blazers to really celebrate and show their achievements.

New staff

Of course, without staff the Academy could not function. We worked very hard in the summer to ensure that we recruited well, and we are fully staffed. We have expanded our pastoral teams and support teams to include capacity in reception, a full-time Mental Health Lead and Behaviour Support Lead, in addition to two new Teaching Assistants, a Library Assistant and Food and Art Technician. These new staff, along with our existing staffing structure, will ensure your child has access to all the support they need, both academically and pastorally.

My weekly Principal's post on my Fairfax **Twitter** account will start again Friday, along with more posts this year with day-to-day activities and updates. Faculties also have their own accounts and I encourage you to follow them to stay in touch with events in school.

@FFaxPrincipal – Sean Castle, Principal
@FairfaxSchool – Fairfax Academy
@FairfaxEnglish – English Faculty
@Fairfax_PE_Arts – PE and Arts Faculty
@FairfaxMaths – Mathematics Faculty
@FairfaxSciTech – Science and Technology Faculty
@FairfaxMFL – Modern Foreign Language Faculty
@FairfaxHouses – House Teams
@FairfaxSupport – Wellbeing and Equality

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 they will make regular contact throughout the year.

Coffee Events

Fairfax will be holding coffee events later this month, which will allow me the chance to meet parents/carers and provide an opportunity to discuss current items you may have. These will take place on:

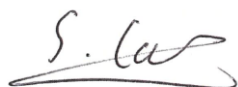
Thursday, 28 September at 09:10-09:50 – Parents/Carers of new Year 7 students.

Thursday, 28 September at 18:00-19:00 – Parents/Carers of new Year 7 students.

Thursday, 9 November at 18:00-19:00 – Parents/Carers from all year groups.

I am really looking forward to seeing students this week and many of our parents/carers throughout the coming year. Together we continue to grow and improve.

Yours sincerely



SEAN CASTLE
Principal