

Our Ref: BSN/KON

February 2015

ALL PARENTS

Dear Parent/Carer

Perhaps it is because I am getting older that time seems to go by faster and faster. Incredibly it is six weeks since we came back from Christmas break and this means that we are approaching another holiday. The pupils and staff have packed a lot into what is a relatively short half-term and can feel justifiably proud of what has been achieved.

I was fortunate enough to attend a very good school; I do not come from an affluent background but my local school was excellent. Reflecting on it now, perhaps the reason it was so successful was because it was an ambitious place. It was a school that expected its pupils to have hopes and dreams for themselves, but it never judged or told anyone what those ambitions should be. It is not for me to tell anyone what they should be aiming for; but it is my job to ensure that every child knows what they could achieve, what it takes to get there and provide the quality of education that can make dreams become a reality. A big part of what we have been doing over the last 18 months has been based on these ideas and, looking forward, this will continue to be the case. While this is a rapidly improving school we are nowhere near our potential or the limit of ambition for each pupil. Over the coming months we will be redoubling our efforts to increase the rate of progress we are achieving.

I have asked parents and carers for support on a number of occasions and I would like illustrate what can be achieved when we work together. Usually at this time of year attendance starts to drop, this year that has not been the case. Our attendance stands comfortably over 95% making us one of the best attended schools in Dudley, this is over 2% higher than two years ago. It seems obvious, but it is worth repeating, that the more a child attends the more they will learn. Pleasingly, this effect is now being seen at our school thanks to a joint effort from the school, parents/carers and pupils. Long may it continue!

As a school we are always keen to help pupils and parents. However, in recent months we have noticed a trend which is making life in school more difficult than it needs to be, so once again I am asking for your help. One of the skills that pupils need to learn and develop is better organisation, but sometimes children (like adults) forget things. I would ask you to speak to your child every night and enquire if they have everything that they need for the next day. The issue is that every time a lesson is disturbed learning is interrupted, over the course of a school year this can have a detrimental impact on progress and achievement. We are having further issues with parents wanting messages passed on. Sometimes this is unavoidable and important but often it is not. Believe it or not, recently we have been asked to pass a message from a parent to a child asking what they would like for their tea! Once again, I would ask you to use common sense and only ask us to pass on messages that are urgent.

At the moment we are finalising our plans to improve the school site during the summer break. Last year we made some big changes that have had a very positive impact on learning. Once again the Governors have given me permission to look at making further significant improvements. In the coming months I will write to you, and speak to the pupils, about the changes we will be making.

As always thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

Ben Stitchman
Headteacher