

26 July 2022

Dear parent/carers

Re: End of Term Update

I write to you as we reach the end of what has been a hard-working, successful and, at times, challenging year at The Dukeries Academy. We have lived our values of integrity, ambition and excellence and should be exceedingly proud of everything we have achieved, often against the odds. We must now challenge ourselves to go even further and create the great Academy that this community both needs and deserves.

Good to Great

Ofsted confirmed that we continue to be a good school when they visited us in October 2021. I remind you that the report stated:

"As pupils enter the school, they are reminded of its inclusive culture by crossing the Rainbow Road. The staff know the pupils very well and have their best interests at heart. Pupils say that they are excited to attend this school and feel safe.

The new principal and other leaders have very high expectations of how pupils should conduct themselves around school. Teachers show pupils how to behave. They also teach pupils how to be proud of their own achievements and celebrate those of others. Pupils say that behaviour is improving, and they can learn in all their lessons.

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum, underpinned by powerful knowledge as one of its six pillars. More pupils are studying a broader range of academic subjects as a result."

In his book Good to Great, Jim Collins states,

"Greatness is not a function of circumstance. Greatness, it turns out, is largely a matter of conscious choice."

We have now made that conscious choice to be a great Academy and must be even more ambitious for our Academy and community. I look forward to sharing our three-year Good to Great Strategy with you in September which details how we will achieve this. In addition, I am determined that we increase parent/carers and community involvement in shaping the future of our Academy and hope that many of you will contribute to our Big Conversation in the autumn term.

Vibrant Extended Opportunities

The Academy offers a vibrant and diverse range of extended opportunities for our students. Following the reduction in COVID restrictions the Academy has really come to life. There have been too many activities to list them all, but my highlights include:

- The Year 7 run in the County Cup football competition
- The 15-mile Challenge
- First Story and subsequent anthology launch

- The impressively good 'We Will Rock You'
- Multiple university visits including Oxford and Cambridge
- The Orchestra Live performance with Synfonia Viva and our partner primary schools
- Over 400 students going to the theatre

Follow us on Twitter @DukeriesAcademy, Facebook @dukeriesacademy and regularly check in on our website to keep up to date with the extended offer at our Academy. I am exceedingly grateful to our staff who give so willingly of their time to support these activities.

Preparing for September

There will be a phased return to the Academy in September. Following two INSET days, Year 7, Year 11, and Year 13 will return to the Academy at 8.40am on Friday 2 September 2022. Year 12 enrolment will also take place on this date. To allow time for new Year 7 parents/carers to set up their School Money account all Year 7 students will have access to a free school meal on Friday 2 September. All other year groups will return on Monday 5 September 2022 at 8.40am.

We have made some changes to the Academy Day and Term Dates which I wrote to you about last week. Please encourage your child to utilise our new breakfast provision which will operate at the beginning of every day.

Uniform and presentation standards at the Academy have been exceedingly strong this year. Thank you for your ongoing support. Details of our uniform expectations for September can be found on our website <https://www.dukeries.atrust.org.uk/parents/uniform/>. Please note the expectations related to skirt and shoe style and sock colour.

The PE Team have written to you in relation to PE kit expectations following a transition year to our new PE supplier. Please support us to ensure students wear our exceedingly smart new kit.

We understand that students may choose to change their hair colour, extend, and paint their nails and have piercings done during the holidays. However, we do have strict presentation standards and I would ask that you ensure students can meet these on their return:

- Hairstyles should be appropriate. No more than one hair colour and no bright, unnatural colours are allowed.
- A small amount of subtle make up is allowed.
- Extended or coloured nails are not acceptable.
- One small stud earring in each ear is allowed. A clear, flat, completely plastic retainer is allowed for a nose piercing (not septum). No other jewellery, piercing or fashion accessories are allowed.
- Students may wear a watch.

Students must also be equipped for learning. Please ensure students bring a **school bag** with them every day. We recommend a rucksack style bag which is large enough to hold A4 sized books, stationery and equipment and PE kit. Students should always bring a **pencil case** which includes, as a minimum, the following:

- Two black pens
- Two green pens
- Two pencils
- A ruler
- An eraser
- A pencil sharpener
- A scientific calculator – this can be purchased at a competitive price from our Maths Faculty in September

Please contact us if financial difficulties are a barrier to meeting our uniform and equipment standards – we will do everything we can to help. Further, we will continue to operate our Standards Gate, every morning, to ensure uniform, presentation and equipment issues are resolved before the start of the Academy Day.

Attendance Expectations

Attendance at TDA has continued to be significantly above national levels and we intend to further improve on this, as evidence shows that great attendance leads to great progress. Due to the severe impact of the pandemic, the Government have raised expectations of regular attendance at school. An attendance rate of 97% is required unless the absence is due to medical circumstances or other significant reasons. 95% attendance means that your child will have missed 10 school days over the year, which is a considerable amount. Students are also expected to be punctual and may be marked absent if they arrive after registers have closed.

Please be aware that minor illnesses will not be authorised. These include headaches, tiredness, period pains, general aches and pains and minor colds. If you wish your child to have access to over the counter medications whilst at the Academy please bring these to the reception and complete the relevant form. Total absences exceeding 5 days will require medical evidence and any unauthorised absences totalling more than 3 days or 6 half days may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being requested from the Local Authority.

We always aim to support students to maintain great attendance and punctuality. If your child does not have correct uniform please ask them to visit 'Standards Gate' at the start of the day where there are staff on hand to resolve any issues. If you believe there are other barriers to your child attending regularly, please contact our Pastoral Team.

If your child is absent, you must contact the attendance line on every day of the absence. You can report an absence in one of three ways:

- Direct Dial Telephone 08442 393393 (you will not need to go through the switchboard)
- Text 07943108675
- If you would like to talk to someone directly you can still call the office on 01623 860545

At TDA we actively discourage holidays during term time. If you are planning to take your child out of the Academy, it is essential that you request and complete a holiday form so we are aware of the reason for this absence. We will not authorise any holidays during term time and will refer any family we believe to have taken a holiday to the Local Authority to be considered for a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Farewells and New Staff

It is the time of year when we say farewell to staff leaving the Academy at the end of term and welcome new colleagues who will be joining our Good to Great Journey in September

Staff Leaving TDA	Staff Joining TDA
Amy Borthorpe-Booth (Teacher of PE)	Louise Reed (Teacher of Humanities)
Tamsin Bryant (Teacher of Science)	Chloe Else (Teacher of English and HOY)
Shannon Dirrane (FL: English)	Terry Nabbs (FL Maths)
Daniel McGill (SSL: Humanities)	Emily Dodman (Teacher of Science)
Laura Mutimer (Teacher of MFL)	Andrew Taylor (SSL: Science)
Stuart Pattullo (SSL: Maths)	Katharine Young (SSL: Music)
James Robinson (Assistant Principal)	Anna Owen (Teacher of PE)
Enrique Sanchez Alacid (Teacher of MFL)	Hollie Mitchell (Teacher of Science)
Liam Spencer (Teacher of Maths)	Daniel Williams (SSL: MFL)
Faye Wilson (SSL: MFL)	Jessica McGuinness (Admin Assistant)

	Olumide Shepherds (Teacher of Maths) James Chapman (Teacher of RE) Ian Forrester (Behaviour Intervention Officer) Sam Ellison (Teacher of PE) Gisela Hurst (Teacher of MFL) Richard Tempest Mitchell (Classroom Teacher) Mike Brett (Vice Principal)
Maternity Leave	Maternity Return
Lindsey Maycock (HOY)	Ashleigh Tebbett (SSL: Science)

I offer my thanks and gratitude to the staff who are leaving the Academy this summer and wish them every success in their new adventures.

Several staff will also change role after the break. I will write to you in September with details.

Local Governing Board (LGB)

After more than 40 years of association with The Dukeries Academy, Gill Empson has retired from our Local Governing Board. Gill has made a considerable and positive contribution to our Academy – as a member of staff, Governor, ATT trustee and laterally as Chair of our Local Governing Board. Her impact has been significant. During her tenure as Chair, she has overseen rapid improvements in examination results, contributed to two ‘good’ Ofsted inspections and, most importantly, shaped educational opportunities which have allowed so many students to go on to become changemakers in their own and other peoples’ lives. I have written to Gill, on behalf of our Academy community, to thank her for her service. I wish Gill a very long and relaxing retirement.

Meg Staples, another long serving member of our Local Governing Board, has also retired. I am grateful to Meg for her expertise and compassion in the role and wish her well in the future.

We now have both Parent and Community Governor vacancies on our LGB. If you would like to find out more about these important roles and how you can contribute to our Academy, please contact my PA Kay Shepherd for more information kay.shepherd@attrust.org.uk.

Exam Results

We look forward to celebrating examination results with our students and Academy community later in the summer.

A-level Results Day is Thursday 18 August 2022 and GCSE Results Day is Thursday 25 August 2022. We have written to you previously with arrangements for each day.

Have a wonderful summer break and I look forward to welcoming new and existing students back to the Academy in September.

Kind regards



Ged Rae
Principal