



25th October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you with an update on this half-term, an offer around parents feeding into school life more and some changes we are making to our behaviour systems off the back of some parent consultation. The students have had a great half-term this Autumn and have been working really hard in lessons and have done you all proud with their achievements! As well as putting maximum effort into their lessons, they have also been developing knowledge and skills in various enrichment activities.

What the students have been up to

The YMCA were excited to pick up all the Harvest Festival boxes that tutor groups have spent time creating from donated items this week which will be delivered to families and individuals in the local area who are in greatest need. Mrs Barlow will do her usual update on the Facebook page to show you some pictures!

I enjoyed waving off our lovely Year 7s on their first residential trip to a PGL outdoor activity centre and from the axe-throwing, Jacob's Ladder and disco footage, I can see they had a wonderful time with Miss Faulding and her team learning new skills and developing friendships! I was lucky enough to be asked to be a judge at the Year 8 JF Song Contest this week and was so proud of all the students for their participation and courage to perform so well in front of their peers. Congratulations to all and especially to Mrs Worthy's tutor group 8S for their winning performance of Stitches! Our Year 9 students have had their auditions for entering the mock trial team last week and our Key Stage 3 team won the Inclusive Games this week in athletics meaning they go through to the regional round. Mr Porter was very delighted with this! In Year 10, the boys football team have played their socks off to secure a place in the quarter finals of the County Cup, which is a great achievement and Miss Grace has launched the Year 10 Buddy Reader scheme off to a flying start! And finally, in Year 11, we were really pleased to welcome students and parents into school yesterday evening for our Routes to Remarkable Evening where revision tips and learning strategies were shared in a series of workshops. Thank you to all who supported this evening, and I hope you found it worthwhile.



Changes to our behaviour system

It has come to our attention that some parents have found our detention system to be overly-punitive and unclear as to what a detention has been issued for. Mr Penman, Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) conducted a parent consultation, student voice and staff voice with pastoral Heads of Year and has listened to the thoughts of all our stakeholders. As a consequence, Mr Penman is making a change to our culture code behaviour system to make it clearer and fairer, allowing a student to make a mistake and learn from it without necessarily receiving an immediate sanction. After half-term:

1. Students will only receive a 30-minute detention once they have 3 strikes for the same behaviour i.e. on the third time they are late to lesson, on the third time they wear incorrect uniform, on the third time they do not have correct equipment
2. To reinforce our Rewards Policy, Mr Penman will add a positive element to the culture code. There is now a Culture Champion reward on Class Charts and every time a student reaches 12 A points in a half term, their name will be placed in a prize draw, and they will also be given a queue jump for the school canteen. Achievements will be awarded for both remarkable work in lesson and conduct outside of lesson in keeping with our school values of ambition, commitment and pride.

These changes have directly been driven by parents giving their thoughts and feelings around this and I thank you for your contributions which has led to driving change within the school for your child.

An early priority after half-term will be for us to focus on the communication element of Classcharts. It has come to my attention that the platform does not always adequately communicate why a student has received a Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the behaviour system and so we will look to make some quick changes when we return to school to better the communication with parents and carers.

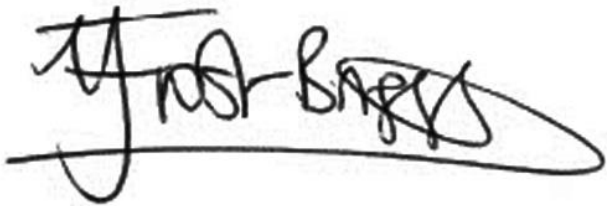
Meanwhile, we will continue to support our students in making positive choices so they can avoid getting negative strikes on their Culture Code through the following actions:

- Uniform: we will provide any student with correct uniform for the day through Student Services. If you know there is a uniform issue, please contact us and we will provide your child with uniform or a blue slip so that staff are aware of the issue. No strikes will be placed on a student's Culture Code
- Equipment: students can get any item of essential equipment, apart from a scientific calculator, free of charge from Student Services. Student Services is open at the start of the day, registration, break and lunch time and the end of the day. Form tutors also have a supply of equipment to give to students. Strikes for missing equipment will only be given to students who have not made the effort to rectify the fact they have forgotten something, in attempt to raise accountability on the students for being prepared for the day.
- Lateness to lesson: parents may remember that we introduced 5-minutes movement time for students to be able to move around the site to get to their next lesson in time.

Clinics with the Senior Leadership Team

Off the back of this parental voice leading to positive change to practice within the school, I would like to formalise the mechanism for gathering parental voice and take the opportunity to further improve the communication between home and school. I'd like to offer parents and carers the opportunity to come into school if they have any concerns or problems and wish to discuss them with a senior leader. These will take place in the form of Clinics with the Senior Team. If this is something which interests you, then please click here <https://forms.office.com/e/q8FzUGr3Gm> for more information.

With my very best wishes for a lovely half-term.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Frost-Briggs', with a large, sweeping underline.

Mrs Helen Frost-Briggs
Executive Head Teacher
John Flamsteed Community School and The Ripley Academy