October 2019

Dear Families

As we approach the end of our first half term I wanted to take the opportunity to reflect on the past eight weeks and to look ahead at some of the things coming up after the break.

Before that I wanted to say thank you, thank you to the students who have shown hard work and dedication, kindness and thoughtfulness, great outputs and persistence. Also, to you the families who have offered support, organised your students to look smart, take their education seriously and get to the Academy on time (Attendance is currently over 97%). By and large the students have been exceptional to work with and are making the Academy a fantastic environment.

**The Half Term in Review**

The last few weeks have seen a whole series of firsts. Our first whole Academy Trip to the National Space Centre, our first football fixtures (and victory, well done girls) as we build the history of the Academy. There are many highlights, but a few include:

Students have completed their first two themes, Citizen Me and Planets, they have produced some outstanding work. In the last week students have been using their one to one devices in their lessons and the Police visited to discuss with them about the importance of e-safety.

We launched our programme of House competitions, including quizzes and our Macmillan Coffee Morning, which featured an amazing display of baking from our talented students, currently Florence leads the overall standings with 44 points.

Students have been appointed to areas of responsibility as School Councillors and Sports Captains. Their first meeting on rewards provided the Senior Leadership Team with much to consider.

We launched our clubs programme with over 15 clubs that students are participating in Our Theatre School travelled to Birmingham Hippodrome for a backstage tour and viewing of Blood Brothers.

You can find more of what has been happening throughout the term on the [students’ and Principal’s blogs](https://wbca.school/the-hub/) which are released weekly on our website.

**Communication**

Communication is something we are working on improving. As you may have seen we now have text and e-mail communication with you. If you have not received any texts or e-mails, please contact the Academy.

We have now launched our Student Portal which students have a password for. Here you can see a showcase of students work, information about the themes and access their class sites which will have resources from their lessons available. This is being populated and improving every day.

We will still be using the student planners and are encouraging students to take responsibility in writing down their homework in their planners. Different groups of students may be set homework at different times. The planner is also a way you can communicate with your child’s Literacy for Life Teacher.

Finally, we have been very frustrated with the issues with the Xpressions App and our ICT team are calling daily to try and resolve this. When active you should see attendance, rewards, behaviour and timetable information.

**Reminders**

**Music Lessons**

At the Academy we offer instrumental music lessons in Brass, Woodwind, Keyboard and Strings. These lessons have spaces available. There is a charge of £6 per weekly lesson which includes instrument hire. This is also provided free to Free School Meals students. If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity students can talk to Miss Walters or parents can put a request into reception.

**Timetable Changes**

Each half term we have some minor timetable changes. Firstly, to enable students to go swimming. As we only have swimming available on a Friday morning, 7.3 will switch to having PE on a Friday and 7.5 will move to having PE on a Thursday. To ensure students experience music and graphics we rotate this each half term and this creates a change on Tuesdays. New timetables will be issued to students.

**Uniform**

The standard of uniform has been excellent this first half term; our students wear their uniform and PE kit with pride. We are, however, aware of a few occasions where students have lost an item of uniform or their shoes have broken. We ask that any uniform issues are addressed over half term so that all students are wearing the correct uniform when we return. Our uniform policy can be found here: [https://wbca.school/the-academy/academy-uniform/](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwbca.school%2Fthe-academy%2Facademy-uniform%2F&data=02%7C01%7CGFaux%40WBCA.shirelandcat.org.uk%7Ce7e2c3583be64e1e294208d758d5223e%7Ce5c4202617cc400b8b06e633a1f82f76%7C0%7C0%7C637075544729131206&sdata=nQwmZsDSO2MwYQre9jr%2FhJbOd517mcsgniBIItHo0Y8%3D&reserved=0)

If shoes are being replaced they must be plain black, polishable leather type shoes that are not in the style of trainers or leisure footwear. We prefer that students where shoes rather than ankle boots, but if worn they must look smart and should only be worn with trousers, not a skirt.

**Lost Property**

There are several items of lost property in Student Reception, including water bottles, shoes, coats and bags. We ask that you ensure your child’s name is clearly marked on their belongings and encourage them to take care of their possessions. We remind them on a daily basis but we are regularly collecting items that are left around the Academy and are unable to return them to their owners without names.

**Coats for the Homeless**

A member of our catering team is collecting coats to support members of the local community who are homeless. We would appreciate any donations of unwanted coats, for male and female adults and children, any sizes, provided they are in good, reusable condition.

Again, I thank you for all your support this half term.  
  
Yours sincerely

George Faux

**Principal**

**Key Dates**

At WBCA we try to ensure students days are full of opportunity. As part of this we have the following key dates next half term.

**4th November - Beat the Bird Launch**

This is a competition in conjunction with West Bromwich Albion Football Club. If students raise a small amount of sponsor money they can take part in a penalty shoot-out against the Baggies Bird to win a variety of prizes. Further details will be released after half term.

**6th November - Debate Mate Visit to Birmingham University**

Students undertaking the Debate Mate programme will be attending a launch at Birmingham University between 1:30-3:30pm we anticipate a return to the Academy just after 4:00pm.

**8th November - WBCA Young Poet of the Year Competition Deadline**

In conjunction with National Poetry Day on the 3rd October we launched a competition to find the WBCA Young Poet of the Year. Student spent some time in Form Time analysing poetry on this year’s theme of Truth before they were challenged to write their own. Entries must be original and submitted to Miss Gardner.

**11th November - Remembrance Day**

We will be observing a special assembly of remembrance and a two minutes silence to reflect upon those that have lost lives in conflict over the years. We support students who wish to buy and wear poppies to support the Royal British Legion.

**13th November - E-Safety, Student Portal and Family Forum**

We will be holding an IT and E-Safety information evening for parents and carers where we will demonstrate the Student Portal and show how you can support your child at home. We will also go through some important information regarding keeping children safe online. This event will be held in conjunction with our Family Forum.

**21st November - Theatre School Blood Brothers Showcase**

Students in Theatre school will be performing at the Birmingham Hippodrome the performance they have been working on each week.

Tickets for Theatre Schools entry into the Birmingham Hippodrome Showcase are now available on the Student Portal. The performance is taking place on Thursday 21st November at 6.30pm. Tickets are £5 and can only be obtained through the Student Portal via the announcement which students were shown in assembly on Friday. We anticipate tickets will sell quickly so please get them as soon as possible.

**6th December – Christopher Lloyd**

Christopher Lloyd is a UK -based author, lecturer and non-fiction storyteller specialising in connecting knowledge together using giant narratives, visual timelines and interactive workshops. He is a graduate in history from Peterhouse Cambridge, and a former Sunday Times science correspondent. He is the Author of

the ‘What on Earth’ series of books and will be coming to perform one of his workshops to our students on this day.

**9th December - Christmas Examinations begin**

In this week Christmas Examinations will take place in English, Mathematics and content from the Literacy for Life curriculum.

**12th December - Manchester United Old Trafford Trip**

We have obtained a number of free tickets for students to see Manchester United play a Europa League match on December 12th. Although the tickets are free, students will be required to pay to cover the cost of coach travel. Students who have demonstrated an interest will be given a letter with further information.

**17th December - Christmas Fair**

On this date we will be holding a Christmas Fair available to both students and families with a series of holiday themed activities.

**20th December – Term Ends**

We will break up for Christmas Holidays on this day. This is an early finish for students of 1:15pm. The Academy will reopen for students on Monday 6th January.

**Sports Fixtures**

Additional sports fixtures may be added but currently we have scheduled:

7th November – Boys Football vs Oldbury Academy

11th November – Girls Football vs George Salter Academy

12th November – Boys Football vs George Salter Academy

20th November – Boys Basketball vs Shireland Collegiate Academy