March 2023

**End of Half Term 4 Letter**

Dear Families

I hope this letter finds you well. This feels like it has been a very fast half term and I apologise to the disruption to the education of your children caused by strikes and snow closure. I also apologise for any inconvenience this has caused you.

Despite the disruption, this has been a busy and packed half term. We have had students out to a number of Universities, we had a real success in the University of Birmingham Maths Challenge, where our Year 10 students came 2nd out of 40 schools and the University of Birmingham Humanities Challenge where our Year 9 students also picked up 2nd place.

During World Book Day students in our lower years dressed as their favourite characters and we were fortunate to have an Author visit from Danielle Jawando.

Students have been to libraries and places of worship, on geography field trips and participated in a host of house activities, clubs and fixtures for the Academy.

**Trust Inspection**

On Thursday 23rd March the Academy had an inspection from the Trust. This involved a team of eight professionals and Principals led by Sir Mark looking at every aspect of the Academy, from our safeguarding and attendance processes, student and parent feedback, the quality of books and lessons themselves.

Feedback was very positive with Sir Mark’s view that this is a great school. Particular praise was given to the students conduct on the day, the quality of their books and outputs, students’ overall attendance and the high standards set for students. The work done around the personal development and pastoral support for students came in for particular praise.

As always there are points for improvement, around consistency from every member of staff, around explaining our curriculum on our website, about ensuring we have the right support in every lesson to support students at all levels of learning.

Many thanks to the 268 of you who filled in the parental survey, about 90% of responses were extremely positive. It was highlighted in the inspection that we should be doing more work gathering your views and that is something we will do more of next term. The survey was completely anonymous so I know we have sent something further out if you would like a contact around any concerns.

We also had a visit on Tuesday 28th March from Michael Jarrett the Director of Childrens Services and Education. Though only a short visit, he praised the calm atmosphere, polite students and enthusiastic staff as he toured the Academy.

**Important Dates**

**End of Term –** The half term will end on Friday 31th March 2023. This will be at the normal finish time of 3:25pm.

**Start of Spring Half Term 2 –** Students should return to the Academy on Monday 17th April at the normal start time of 8:45am.

**Bank Holidays and the Kings Coronation –** There are a number of bank holidays next half term. There is the May Day Bank holiday on Monday 1st May 2023. There is also an additional Bank Holiday for the Coronation of King Charles III on Monday 8th May 2023. The Academy will be closed on both of those days.

**Inset Day –** The Academy will have a Training Day on Friday 21st April 2023, this is a planned training day which also coincides with Eid al Fitr which we believe will be on that day.

**End of Next Half Term –** The next half term will end on 29th May 2023.

**Staff Changes**

**Staff Leaving –** This Easter we say goodbye to Miss Townsend (Head of Business/IT) and Miss Dosanjh (Science). We wish them both well in their future careers.

**Staff Arriving –** We are welcoming four new staff, Mr Glover (Head of Business/IT), Mr Iqbal (Science), Mr Bunce (Computer Science) and Ms Don Carolis (PE and Health and Social Care.) We look forward to welcoming them as part of our community.

**Staff Appointments –** Mr Vaughan has been appointed as Head of Physical Education and has now begun in this role.

**Parental Support and Information**

**Parent/Carer Exam Stress Workshop – Tuesday 16th May 5-6.30pm –** Our Mindful Life Counselling team will be delivering another workshop, this time focusing on supporting students with exam stress. “Learn about the biological and social factors that cause exam stress in teens, what keeps it going, and ways to support your teen to cope with the anxiety of revision and sitting exams. We’ll talk about how you can communicate with, motivate, and support your teen to engage with revision strategies that work, whilst balancing this with wellbeing strategies.”

Please sign up on the form below, or email rperry@wbca.shirelandcat.net:

[Microsoft Forms](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=M3cpbyH17EqwKDhN0u2mQ9XDJGH6g35PhPqxXWCQ2PtUQTZDUlUyUEJKNkFWSjZTTkkxUzVYSktPRS4u)

**Parents Evenings –** Parents evening will take place next half term for Year 8 on the 25th May 2023

**Options Evening and Deadline –** We apologise that the weather forced us to postpone Options Evening. We are looking forward to seeing Year 9 parents on Thursday 30th March to provide advice and guidance on choosing their options.

The date for choosing options has been moved back to Monday 24th April.

**Assessment 2 Reports –** Assessment 2 reports for Years 7, 8 and 10are available via Edulink before the end of term. If you have not received these or would like to make an appointment to see a teacher about your child’s progress after Easter please contact the Academy. Year 9 Assessment 2 is part of their full report.

**Free School Meal Vouchers –** As in previous holidays we are providing vouchers to families for students are eligible for Free School Meals. This should be to the value of £30 and should reach you via e-mail from the Wonde system. If there are any issues, please contact the Academy office.

**Helping Students to be Successful**

**Work Experience Placements –** For the first time this year, Year 10 will be undertaking Work Experience in the first week of July. At the moment we and the students are arranging placements, some from our provider list, some through personal connections. If you need support with this process please contact the Academy. If you think your workplace would be able to provide a work experience placement to one or several of our students and have interesting opportunities, please contact the Academy to find out how to get involved.

**Water Bottles –** Students are welcome to bring a water bottle to the Academy and to have water during non-practical lessons. At the moment we are running a promotion through our rewards shop where students can purchase one for 100 e-praise points.

However, students are expected to be organised, to come with it filled and to fill at break and lunch if necessary, students should come prepared to their classes and will not be allowed to miss learning time to fill bottles or ask for cups of water.

**Back to Basics –** As students get older sometimes they can become a bit complacent about ensuring they are properly prepared when arriving to the Academy. Uniform and equipment lists are as if not more important for our older students as our younger ones.

Please do check what equipment your child is bringing to the Academy, while we do our best to rectify issues when students arrive, this wastes learning time. If you need support with uniform or equipment please contact our safeguarding team and we will help from our hardship fund.

Students who are on time, properly equipped and with the right attitude to learn will be successful.

**Final Message**

This has been a very busy half term with lots happening in the Academy and we have been very proud of our students’ hard work. I wish you all a restful, happy break.

Yours sincerely

George Faux

**Principal**

**Spring Term 2 Calendar**

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| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Start of Half Term | 17th April 2023 |
| New Themes Begin: Growing (Y7), Coast (Y8), America (Y9) | 17th April 2023 |
| Staff Training Day | 21st April 2023 |
| Year 9 Options Deadline | 24th April 2023 |
| Year 7 DECCA Visit | 27th April 2023 |
| Bank Holiday | 1st May 2023 |
| Year 7 Off with your Head Theme | 2nd May 2023 |
| Georgia Byng – Author Visit | 5th May 2023 |
| Kings Coronation Bank Holiday | 8th May 2023 |
| Year 8 Please Sir Theme | 15th May 2023 |
| Parents Examination Stress Workshop | 16th May 2023 |
| Year 10 Geography Carding Mill Valley | 22nd and 23rd May 2023 |
| Year 8 and Year 10 End of Year Reports | 19th May 2023 |
| Year 8 Parents Evening | 25th May 2023 |
| End of Half Term | 29th May 2023 |