

Our ref: DSH/AKE

Wednesday 21st December 2022

Dear parent/carer,

Thank you for your support over the Autumn Term of the 2022-2023 academic year.

When we return after the Christmas break, we will be into our third half-term of the academic year. As always, we will put significant emphasis into creating a culture which praises students and staff for the effort they put into making our students the successful, well-rounded and educated young people which they aspire to be. We place our students at the centre of everything we do, and we want to ensure that they enjoy their time with us at Outwood Academy Portland, by making the most of the amazing opportunities given to them.

Bus Passes

As you are all aware, we have been checking bus passes since mid-November to help to ensure a safe journey home for all of our students. By now we expect that students have a valid bus pass for the correct bus number and journey. If you require any more assistance, please contact Mrs Bennett via our enquiries email at enquiries@portland.outwood.com. For information on bus timetables/routes, please visit our website at <https://www.portland.outwood.com/walking-bus>.

Attendance and Punctuality

We strive for all students to have excellent attendance - at least 95%+ as research proves that there is understandably a direct correlation between good attendance and excellent academic outcomes.

In regards to punctuality, all students must be on-site by 8.15am, in readiness for students moving to lessons at 8.20am and lessons underway by 8.25am.

Enrichment

Over the Autumn term we have launched an extensive enrichment programme, with academic, creative and sports clubs running from 2.30pm - 3.30pm every day, all free of charge. The sessions are inclusive to everyone at the Academy. Please support your child in attending enrichment, as it is an excellent opportunity to try something new, develop skills and work with others outside of the classroom and our regular curriculum.

The enrichment timetable can be found on our website here: <https://www.portland.outwood.com/enrichment-and-extended-learning>

We're always listening to our students' ideas for clubs. There is also no commitment to sign up for any length of time (unless your child is asked to attend our Year 11 targeted sessions), and students may try as many different clubs as they like, by simply arriving at the session.

Uniform and Equipment

A smart uniform improves discipline, self-esteem and self-respect. Uniform focuses attention upon learning and away from distractions. So that all pupils have a sense of pride in their appearance, we ask that the uniform is worn appropriately and in its entirety. Our full uniform policy can be found on our website at <https://www.portland.outwood.com/policies>.

We pride ourselves on the standards of Academy uniform, as our students look extremely smart and wear their uniform with pride in the community. We also ensure they have the correct equipment as part of our 'being responsible' values. Please support your child in being prepared for each school day with a few key reminders that we're really focussing on:

- As the weather changes, the uniform policy permits a plain black v-neck jumper underneath blazers. This must not be branded (with exception to the Outwood logo) and hoodies and sweatshirts are strictly not permitted.
- We have seen a significant increase in the number of students requiring to borrow an item of school uniform. Please note we should only lend uniform out as a last resort. Please do not rely on our student reception to loan uniform for prolonged periods of time. All borrowed items of uniform should be returned at the end of the school day.

Additional uniform can be purchased from <https://www.trutex.com/> and entering our unique code **LEA00640SC**. There is also now an option to access Pre-loved uniform. In these challenging times, please also speak to colleagues at the Academy if you require further support through our Pupil Premium and/or Hardship Fund Scheme.

Items such as earrings, nose studs, rings, bracelets, necklaces and other jewellery (including clear inserts) are not allowed for health and safety reasons and will be confiscated if seen. The first time jewellery is confiscated it may be collected by the student at the end of the day, however, if confiscated for a second time it must be collected by an adult.

Make-up must be very discrete and fake eyelashes are not allowed, and students will be expected to remove them. We do not permit any nail varnish or false nails of any kind. Can I ask you kindly to ensure Christmas lashes and nails are removed before we commence learning in January.

Equipment

Students must have their Academy Planner with them throughout the academy day. It is a key resource for accessing lessons, as it includes their whiteboard, coloured response cards, timetable, diary for recording information, individual subject resources and much more. If a student forgets their planner they will be provided with a temporary 1 day planner page for that day and a C4b sanction will be issued. If this becomes a persistent issue and/or the planner is lost, parents will be expected to purchase a new planner.

All students must have a school bag as part of our uniform expectations. It should be large enough to fit an A4 folder, their PE kit and basic equipment.

Free School Meals

We want to make sure as many eligible pupils as possible are claiming their free school meals. The Academy will also receive extra funding called 'pupil premium'. We use this extra money to improve the educational provision and resources at the school.

Your child might be eligible if you access:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods).
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after the person stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

To find out more information or apply for Free School Meals for your child please visit the website link below:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-milk>.

Celebrating Success!

Here are a few of the highlights from our Autumn term:

- We all came together as a family for the Teenage Cancer Trust at the Sheffield Tiger Ground to Run with Lulu. Our amazing team have managed to raise a staggering £5720 (so far!) for the Teenage Cancer Trust and Lulu Blundell. For those of you who don't know, Lulu is an ex-student of ours, and the daughter of our colleagues. She was diagnosed with bone cancer at the age of 15. She went through chemotherapy and had to have her leg amputated in order to save her life. On the 20th January 2020 Lulu was confirmed to be cancer free. Lulu is now 19 years old. Tragically, she has recently discovered that the cancer has returned and is terminal, giving her only 3 months to live. To read Lulu's full story and donate to our JustGiving page, please visit https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jess-willey?utm_source=copyLink&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=jess-willey&utm_campaign=pfp-share&utm_term=6a240567ed36486b96996d944746d803/
- As part of our fundraising efforts for the Teenage Cancer Trust and Lulu Blundell some of our Year 11 students went head-to-head with some of our staff in sports tournaments on Friday 25th November (Volleyball), Friday 2nd December (Badminton), and Friday 9th December (Table Tennis).
- We have launched a successful bronze ACE programme and introduced our beautiful Year 7 meet and greets.
- We've had several weekends away with the Duke of Edinburgh and took our Year 11 students on a successful Geography field trip to Hornsea.
- We held a spectacular Year 6 Open Evening, a stunning Year 11 revision evening, a beautiful week of languages, the launch of the student parliament, and the great Portland bake-off. (Well done, Mrs Elliott)
- We held our Praising Stars | Parents Evening on Thursday 10th November. We were so amazed and grateful for the amount of students and parents who attended to speak to our teaching staff.

- The Year 7 Parents' Information Evening took place on Thursday 10th November and was a great success. The intention of the evening was to provide you with more information about our academy, including information on our aspirations for your child, our standards and expectations in the academy, and the levels of support we offer. The evening included an exciting opportunity for you to meet the departments of your child's subjects. Parents were also able to see and discuss what your child will be learning in lessons over the rest of their time in Year 7, and the enrichment opportunities available to them.
- The October half term was topped off with two stunning days of Praising Stars celebrations in the dining room, our best year yet when considering our vast reduction in sanctions.
- We've had some amazing sporting events including
 - Our U16 boys football team secured a place in the County Cup quarter final after beating Hall Park School 2-1
 - Our U13 girls football team won their latest County Cup match against Tuxford
 - Our U14 boys football team showed amazing determination and resilience in their County Cup game against George Spencer, as did our U15 girls football team in their match against Outwood Academy Valley
 - Our U13 boys football team showed excellent skills in their County Cup match against Retford Oaks – and one of our Y11 students refereed this match
 - Our U14 girls football team had another win against Tuxford
- We received an overwhelming number of applications from students to be our new Student Parliament Prime Minister. From those we shortlisted five candidates who then campaigned to be PM. They created campaign videos which were viewed by the student body as part of the tutor programme - these were some of the best we have ever had. They also created posters and campaign literature. The election took place Monday November 21st. We had polling station signs, booths and ballot boxes and all students had the opportunity to vote. It was an amazing event and we successfully appointed our new Student Parliament Prime Minister and Deputy.
- Our Annual Carol Service took place on Tuesday 13th December at St Anne's church. We were so proud of their talents and the Christmas magic, which they shared with the link primary schools and the community.
- The school production of 'The Addams Family' took place on Wednesday 23rd, Thursday 24th and Friday 25th November, our students and some Post 16 students took part. It was a roaring success. Our students were extremely professional and showed excellent resilience.
- Our Year 11 Mock Exams took place in the weeks commencing Monday 7th November and Monday 14th November.

Upcoming Events for the Spring term

- Our next Parents' Evening is scheduled for Thursday 12th January.
- We will celebrate our Praising Stars 2 E1 students.
- We will hold our Parent Voice meeting in February.
- Our Intermediate Maths Challenge takes place Wednesday 1st February.
- The Sports Awards Ceremony takes place Thursday 2nd February.
- Our Year 11 students have a Blood Brothers Workshop in our Main Hall on Monday 27th February.
- Our 'What's Next' Careers Fair is scheduled to take place Wednesday 29th March.

- Praising Stars 3 will be released.
- Our next Year 11 Mock Exams will take place in March.

We really value your support in upholding our standards and expectations so that we can focus our efforts into fantastic learning and teaching, and improving our student experiences. My colleagues and I at the Academy are really looking forward to working with you and your child(ren) over the next term.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and look forward to welcoming our students back in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs D Sheehan
Principal

