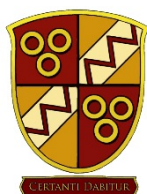


# The Oldershaw Academy

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December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

In my last end of term letter, I wrote about how very strange it felt to be getting in touch at the end of an academic year without having seen most of our pupils for so long. I'm delighted therefore to say that this letter very much sees us back to normal – or the new normal, at least.

We have had so many wonderful successes this term as my colleagues have continued to go to incredible lengths to welcome back all pupils and support families in these most trying of times. Furthermore, we have adapted remarkably smoothly to new ways of working, with enhanced hygiene at all times, one-way systems and remote online learning through Teams all implemented to the benefit of our young people. That all this has coincided with a period when we are oversubscribed and contending with the happy problem of a full school and waiting lists of parents who wish to transfer their children to Oldershaw, is yet further evidence of how my staff has pulled together to serve our children.

## Kindness

I remain incredibly proud of all that my colleagues have done for pupils and families in our community during this time of unprecedented challenge, but I'm especially proud to report that we have sourced an additional 200 laptop computers to ensure that all children have access to education to consolidate their learning and make good progress. Furthermore, we are significantly above the national secondary school average for pupil attendance this year, which is testament to our constant focus on kindness in helping so many anxious children return to school.

## Pre-Public Examinations

As you will be aware, the government is intending to go ahead with GCSE and A Level exams this summer. However, Covid contingencies remain in place and it is therefore crucial that we have a robust set of evidence for every pupil in case there is a change to the summer plans. In that context, I am pleased to report that Years 10, 11 & 13 have been fully engaged in revising for and sitting their Pre-Public Examinations over the final two weeks of term and I commend all of those pupils on their mature and focused approach to these crucial exams.

Year 11 will be having their Mock GCSE Results Day when we return in January after which our Period 7 programme of extra lessons will become more targeted. Mrs Riley, Interim Progress Leader for Year 11, will be in touch with full details.

## Parental Consultation

It is thought unlikely that we will be able to hold traditional parents' evenings for the remainder of the school year due to Covid restrictions. However, we intend to run two parent consultation weeks for the entire school in the weeks beginning 8<sup>th</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Further details will be shared nearer the time, but we will invite you to book a slot for a telephone consultation with your child's form tutor or progress leader during that week. Each

member of staff will have access to attitude to learning, progress and attendance information, as well as subject teacher comments.

### **Changes to the Final Week of Term – *Including The Last Day***

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December, the government advised that schools should close a day early to ensure that family Christmases are not disturbed by Covid track and trace.

**We will therefore close for Christmas from 2.45pm on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December** with pupils waved farewell by my staff and I as they leave, staggered as follows:

Year 10 – 2.45pm

Year 9 – 2.50pm

Year 8 – 2.55pm

Year 7 – 3.00pm

Year 11 will end the term as soon as their last exam is over, as per the already published Pre-Public Examinations timetable.

In the run up to the end of term, we will continue to deliver a full curriculum as usual - except on the final day when, in the afternoon, we will have rewards assemblies, form Christmas parties and a remote Christmas assembly in place of our usual whole school gathering to end the term. We ask that all pupils continue to wear full school uniform up to and including Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

**All pupils return to school at 8.30am on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

As ever, please keep checking the school website for all information updates.

### **Fond Farewells**

At the end of this term we say fond farewells to the following members of staff: Ms Lucy McKeown (Teacher of PE and Science) and Mr Rory Greenwood (Teacher of Science). They have each made an important contribution to the life of the Academy and leave with our best wishes for the future.

Finally, I fully recognise that the national Covid situation has presented many challenges for families, and my colleagues and I very much appreciate how parents and carers have supported us during this time. It is vital that we continue to work together to ensure all children attend school every day and make good progress in their learning and with homework, as well as in their wider development as young people. As ever, your support for the work we do with your children is very much needed and appreciated.

So, let me close by thanking once again all parents and carers – as well as their children - for their continued support of the Academy. I wish each and every one of you a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Yours sincerely



**Jon Bush  
Principal**