Broadening Horizons to Aspire, Believe, Succeed

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4th September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you and your families have enjoyed a restful summer break. As we begin the new academic year, I want to extend a warm welcome back to all our students and to those joining us for the first time. We are looking forward to a positive, purposeful year ahead.

It has been wonderful to welcome our new Year 7 students into the school. They have started confidently and look very smart in their uniform. To support them, please remind your child to:

- Arrive prepared each day, including P.E kit, to avoid disruption.
- Keep you informed of after-school arrangements, particularly as darker evenings draw in.
- Label clothing and equipment clearly to help us return lost property.

As always, your partnership is vital in helping us maintain high standards and create an environment where every child can thrive. With this in mind, I would like to remind all families of a few key expectations for the year:

• Attendance: Excellent attendance is one of the strongest predictors of success and outcomes can be over 1.5 grades higher in students with above 95% attendance compared to below 90%. We expect all students to attend every day, on time, unless absence is unavoidable. Please continue to support us by ensuring routines are in place from day one.

Our student entrance, Clarkes Lane, opens at 8.15am to allow students to access MUGAs, social spaces and to access food before school, a reminder there is free porridge available for students every morning. All students should be in school by 8.30am, ready to be in tutor for 8.40am

A polite request please to all parents/carers - please do not block the student pedestrian access to the school site. Cars are unable to drive across the pedestrian area between the times 8.15 – 8.45 and 3.00pm – 3.30pm (2:15pm – 2:45pm on Fridays).

• Behaviour: We remain committed to fostering a calm, respectful and ambitious school culture. Our behaviour expectations are clear, consistent and designed to help every student learn without disruption. Please speak with your child about the importance of meeting these standards.

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• Mobile Phones: To support focus and wellbeing, students must not be able to access mobile phones during the school day. Students are expected to hand in phones at the start of the school day. Any phone seen or heard after this will be confiscated in line with our policy and can be collected on a Friday only.

We will make reasonable adjustments for students with medical conditions who require mobile phones to manage their health, parents/carers should contact the school (if this has not already been done) to share this information.

• Toilets: Your child may return home saying that toilets are locked during the school day. We are locking toilets during lessons to ensure the safety of all children, as they can be a place to truant, use vapes etc. and we are looking to eradicate both of these behaviours in school. Toilets are accessible for all students (should they need them during lesson time) on the ground floor of A block. This area will be under constant supervision throughout the day.

• Free School Meals: all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit will now be entitled to receive a free school meal. Please follow this link for more information - https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/schools-education/free-school-meals.
Free School Meal allocations are loaded onto student's fingerprints at 9am each day and can be used at either break or lunchtime.

We appreciate your continued support in reinforcing these expectations at home. Working together, we can ensure that every student has the best possible start to the year.

If you have any questions or require support, please do not hesitate to contact your child's year team.

Finally, we value strong relationships with parents/carers and ask for your support in keeping communication effective and respectful. Please keep in mind that:

- Calls will be directed via our phone menu; messages can be left if staff are unavailable.
- Emails should be kept brief; we aim to respond within 24–48 hours.
- If you wish to see staff in person, please book an appointment to avoid delays.
- All external calls are recorded, and any abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

Yours faithfully,

Mike Smith
Head teacher