

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019,

Dear Parents and Carers,

I cannot believe we have reached the end of the autumn term already. It has been a busy, hardworking and enjoyable term. I am confident that you will enjoy reading about what we have been up to as well as giving you all some important updates for the New Year. It is an important time for the school, it is under transition and will become an academy soon after the New Year under the guidance of Star academies. I am thoroughly excited for the school, its staff and students and believe that this will be the start of the school regaining its status as an outstanding provider.

## Parental engagement

I want to thank you for engaging with the school. Over 150 sets of parents have attended the Headteacher updates in the first term. I have also met many of you, in one to one meetings. I want to thank you for your ongoing support to the school. You are immensely proud of your children and you have aspirations for them which you want them to realise with the support of the school. The continued partnership of school, students and parents will ensure and assure that we are all moving in the right positive direction in aspiring for the very best in all who attend Starbank School

## Year 11 and Pre-Public Examinations

In the last few weeks, year 11 have completed their Pre-Public Examinations (mock exams). This is an opportunity for them to check their progress. Their conduct in the examinations was on the whole excellent. I was very proud of them. We have tried to replicate what would happen in the summer with exam preparation, exam situations, marking of exam papers and moderation of marks. We are confident that this will be excellent preparation for our students as they move into the final six months of their academic studies for year 11. Your child's second set of Pre-Public Examinations (mock exams) will start on the **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020**. The results from these Pre-Public Examinations will give them specific topics to revise in preparation for their final actual GCSE exams. You also had an opportunity to meet with subject teachers at the most recent year 11 event. We will be doing a senior teacher event in the New Year. The date for this event is **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020** and I will be in touch with you very soon in January to confirm your personalised time and the agenda for the meeting.

Year 11 will be invited to, and **it is essential that they attend**, after school masterclasses and coursework catchup sessions. These lessons are specifically put in place in preparation for the exams which will be fast approaching after Easter 2020. Please support us by talking to your child to impress upon them the importance of attending these sessions. By working closely together, the potential of achievement and success will be increased. We will contact you via text message or letter if your child fails to attend a session.

To date, 78 year 11 students have been formally interviewed by our external Careers Guidance Counsellor. This has supported their post 16 applications. All remaining students will have the same opportunity before their exams. Significant number of students have attended post 16 interviews with many of them securing offers which are of course very much dependent on the final GCSE results in August 2020. A further 60 students have visited South and City College for aspirational 'taster' days. All students will have similar experiences before their exams.



**Starbank**  
School

## Teaching & Learning

In November we launched with all students and all staff, 5 non negotiables for work in their exercise books. The expectations are that all follow the agreed statements. For students they are as follows:

- ★ Ensuring that they are aware of their targets (front of their book)
- ★ Presentation of their work is the very best it can be
- ★ Ensuring that all classwork is completed leading to appropriate teacher feedback
- ★ Time is given to students to act on the feedback given by teachers, so that they improve their understanding. This should be written in green pen
- ★ Students to be responsible for catching up on any missed work

In January, we will be embedding this into our everyday expectations. These are clear guidelines of our expectations of teachers, students and parents in how the learning workbook should be used. They have been made explicit and we hope that by working in partnership that we will see very positive outcomes for all students. My expectations are that when possible, books will be coming home. I therefore hope that you will have the opportunity to sit with your son/daughter and look at the work that they have been completing in class and supporting them and the school in ensuring that they maintain high standards. There will be an added expectation that the Senior Leadership Team and all middle leaders will be involved in the monitoring process by looking at a number of learning workbooks across every curriculum area, looking at presentation of work, marking and feedback. This will allow the school to share best practice as well as look at what we can learn from each other.

## Your child's progress

All parents should expect a data report for their child by **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020**. The report will be significantly different from previous reports but will indicate whether your child is on track or not on track to meet their end of year target. It is more important that you are aware of this, as the conversations that you then have with the teachers should be about what needs to happen next for them to improve. You should expect two of these types of reports next year. The second one will be in the late summer term. There will be a complete review of assessment and reporting to parents with an improved system in place for September 2020.

## Punctuality to school

I would also like to thank all students who make every effort to be in school on time ready for tutor time and assemblies. I strongly believe that being punctual to school prepares all students for the school day because they are gaining information from their tutors, being part of a whole school assembly and being made ready to work. It is an essential part of life which will carry on as students move into college, further education and employment. I thank all parents who have and continue to support this. If your child has been persistently late in the morning, you will be receiving a letter making you aware of this and the actions we would like you to take to ensure that your child is in school on time. If your child continues to be late the school will be taking further action.



# Starbank School

## Lost property

Since the start of this term, the school has accumulated a number of items which include coats, jackets, school blazers, school ties, school bags with contents and PE kits. Can I please ask you where possible to make sure every item of school clothing and property is named. I am sure many of these items have come at quite an expense. Our aim is to return every piece of lost property to its rightful owner, so if you believe your child has lost any of these please ask them to make a visit to the lost property area.

## Uniform

I would like to thank all parents and students who make every effort to keep to our uniform regulations. You will find our uniform guide below as well as on our website. I would like to remind you that all students must wear black shoes – not trainers, pumps, boots or footwear with logos. As we approach the winter, some students may decide to wear boots on their way to school.

During this time, boots must then be put away into a plastic bag and then a school bag. Shoes must then be worn around the school. I would also like to remind you about our rules regarding jewellery, make up, facial piercings and hair colour/styles which are clearly explained in the guidelines. **My expectations are that all students will return in January in full school uniform.**

 Grey Blazer with School Logo				 Grey V-Neck Jumper with Red Strip		 White Shirt		 School Tie											
 Girls PE Polo				 Rugby Shirt		 Boys PE Polo													
 Girls Black Pleated Skirt				 or Black Tailored Trousers		 Boys Black Tailored Trousers													
 Black tights or socks		 Black low heeled shoes (no trainers)		 Black Socks		 Black shoes (no trainers)		 Tracksuit Top		 Tracksuit Bottom		 Drawstring bag with Logo		 Black or White Trainers (No fashion shoes/pumps)					
<h3>Hair, headwear and accessories</h3> <p>Hair must be of a natural colour and in an appropriate style. No tramlines, Mohicans, extreme styling or hair or eyebrow designs. Pupils may cover their head for religious/cultural reasons - Black head scarf only.</p>										<p><b>For girls:</b> Piercings: one stud earring in each ear only Hairbands/clips in school colours only No makeup, false nails or coloured nail varnish</p>					<h3>Outdoor clothing</h3> <p>Outdoor coats must be of a dark colour No leather, denim jackets or hoodies are allowed Hats, scarves and gloves must be plain black</p>				

All our uniform is available to buy from:



Clive Mark Schoolwear (Sheldon branch)  
2282 Coventry Rd,  
Sheldon, Birmingham,  
B26 3JR



## Reminder end of term plans and some key dates for 2020

End of Autumn Term is Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

Students will finish school at 12.15pm. It will be a non-uniform day with a minimum donation of 50p which will go towards children in need.

Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Start of Spring Term (8.40am)	Tuesday 11th Feb	Year 9 DT/HPV/ Meningitis vaccinations
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan	Year 8 HPV vaccinations (all students)	Friday 14th Feb	End of first half term in Spring
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan	Year 11 senior leader parents evening	Monday 24th Feb	Start of second half term in Spring
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> Jan	Year 8 parents evening	Thursday 5th Mar	Year 10 Parents evening
TO BE CONFIRMED	Year 8 GCSE options event	Friday 3rd April	End of Spring term

## Celebration

This term, it has been wonderful to see a number of our students who have taken the opportunity to be involved in out-of-hours learning and enrichment activities, including sport, music, art and drama. Some highlights include:

- ★ 28 students in year 7-10 who have participated in the schools Shakespeare project 2019, performing an abridged Midsummer Night's Dream before a full paying audience at the Old Rep Theatre in Birmingham.
- ★ 26 students in year 7 and 8 have engaged in a three month professionally delivered theatre outreach project in partnership with the Hippodrome Theatre, culminating in a performance of the musical Blood Brothers at the Hippodrome where one student, Tayyib Iqbal has earned a prestigious scholarship through the merit of his own performance. What amazing and fantastic news!
- ★ 24 year 8 and 9 students have enlisted for the prestigious Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and will be embarking on their first planned and assessed expedition in the spring term.
- ★ A number of students performed in the winter festival (Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019), showcasing a range of multi-instrumental talent from beginner to experienced.
- ★ Year 9 work experience was launched in November 2019. To date, 32 students have confirmed they have secured a placement of their own independently, which is a wonderful start. We do now need more students to be proactive, so that they too can secure their placements. Work experience will take place in December 2020.

## In case of severe weather

As we have entered the winter season, in the event of closure due to weather conditions the school will follow the guidance of Birmingham City Council. This will be announced on local radio: BBC Radio West Midlands 95.6FM, Heart 100.7FM and Free Radio 96.4FM. You will also be able to keep updated with notifications on our school website and our twitter feeds @starbank\_school

## Farewell

I would like to wish farewell to Miss Yasin (Head of English), Miss Luesley and Miss Platt (teachers of English) who will be leaving us at the end of this term. I would like to take this opportunity to wish them well for the future and to thank them all for their contribution and dedication to the students of Starbank School. We would also like to wish Mrs Dosanjh all the best for the future and thank her for her commitment, dedication and significant service for the past 13 years. Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you a restful and relaxing holiday and to remind you that students return to school on **Tuesday 7th January 2020**. Happy Christmas to families celebrating Christmas, a very happy New Year and all the very best for 2020 to all students and their families.

Best wishes

Mr. Gaetano Ferrante  
Secondary Headteacher