



18th October 2017

Dear Parent /Carer

Thank you for the welcome that you have given us all. Your help with what we are doing has been hugely appreciated and is key to supporting the rapid improvement that we are committed to bringing about. The clear majority of students have taken all the changes in their stride and see the benefit of them. As we come to the end of the first half of term I think that we have made a good start and I thought that you would appreciate an update on where we are and the key challenges that remain.

Actions taken to improve the school

School organisation

1. The new timings of the school day support learning and reduce lateness with students starting with period one rather than assembly.
2. The restructure of break and lunch times into two equal periods of 30 minutes mean that there is less pressure on the canteen and improves behaviour in free time.
3. Staff are now high profile during break and lunch which supports a calm and pleasant atmosphere.
4. Staff attendance has been excellent and students comment on the consistency in the classroom; the previous reliance on supply teachers has been reduced significantly.
5. All teaching staff are on their doors at lesson changeovers - these are now calm and orderly.
6. Every lesson visited every day by the leadership team; all behavioural issues are now picked up immediately.
7. The leadership team is high profile and approachable; students welcome this.
8. Bells have been removed – the day is now calm and reliant on positive interactions between staff and students.
9. Students enter lessons in an orderly fashion and in silence.

Environment

1. The school now looks smart and fit for purpose.
2. All classrooms have been cleared of unnecessary items and are now neat and tidy to support learning.
3. All students are now in the correct uniform. Parents and carers have been universally supportive.
4. The school now has an open-door policy and students can access it on their arrival.
5. Eleven new interactive whiteboards have been installed and all others are now working.
6. School displays have been updated and improved. They now support learning, showcase student work and enhance the environment.

Staff

1. All staff wear business dress to reflect their professionalism.
2. The school's standards have been quality assured by experts from other schools in the Trust.
3. We have a performance management system now in place for all staff and individual targets reflect the whole school priorities.
4. All staff have visited high performing schools to inform their practice.
5. The leadership team's offices are now spread around the school to provide greater presence and support.

Learning

1. We have compulsory staff training every Wednesday focused on teaching and learning.
2. The students have, in the main, responded well to our clear expectation on book presentation, homework and focus in lessons.
3. Feedback and improvement time ('FIT') is now in place to support learning and assessment. You will see evidence of this in students' books.
4. We are currently reviewing the curriculum to ensure it supports the latest GCSE requirements that all students sit at least 8 GCSEs.
5. A formal teaching and learning review is scheduled for the 5th and 6th December. It will be led by Steve Williams, the Trust's improvement partner.

Community liaison

1. All primary feeders visited and local headteachers have been met; the feedback has been positive.
2. We have committed to providing a full programme of primary liaison later in the academic year.
3. Our welcome evening on the 18th September was attended by 114 people.
4. The school's open evening on the 28th September was attended by 350 people. The feedback from both these events was extremely positive.


Key challenges

1. The behaviour of 10-12 students. We will be resolute in demanding high standards. There is no place at Everest Community Academy for students who will not conform to the school rules.
2. Improving the work ethic of some students.
3. Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. Still too many students have odd days off and there are too many requests for holidays in term time. Please support us by sending your child to school every day where at all possible.
4. Insisting on the correct uniform for all students. We still have a very small number of girls who persist in wearing inappropriate trousers. Please ensure that your daughter adheres to our uniform policy.
5. Some students wear hoodies as their school coat. These are not allowed.

As half-term approaches we send best wishes to Robyn Edwards-Peal, head of Art & Design, who starts her maternity leave. In her place we welcome Shelley Brewer, an experienced Art and Photography teacher who is returning from maternity leave herself. Tina Simpson, our Hair & Beauty teacher is now going to be based at Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College full time. I am delighted to say that this will not mean any changes to her current teaching commitments for Years 10 and 11 who will continue to go there for their lessons. However, Year 9 students will have a change of location and will now attend Cranbourne for their two lessons per week.

It just leaves me to reiterate my thanks for all your support, which has been absolute. These are exciting times for the school and we have all thoroughly enjoyed the last seven weeks here. I hope that you have a restful half-term and that your children return refreshed on Monday, 30th October ready for an 8.30 a.m. start.

Yours sincerely



Mr A Russell
Headteacher