

19 February 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

School update and next steps

I am sure that many of you will have seen the very strong performance of the Bourne Education Trust in the multi-academy trust league tables that were published recently. We are very pleased with the progress being made by Everest Community Academy to date and are confident that students are receiving better quality teaching and support and enjoying the visible and proactive leadership across the school.

First and foremost, the vast majority of the students are delightful and have embraced the changes that we have made. This term sees the year 11 students in the final build-up to their GCSEs and their focus and dedication to their studies has been very encouraging. All years have undertaken one formal exam to date and are scheduled to do another two before the end of the academic year. We are pleased with students' progress but there is much more to come – the students here are very capable and should be aiming high: college, apprenticeships and university are all within their grasp.

Behaviour has improved significantly. However, we have, sadly, had to remove some students from the school and will continue to do this if individuals refuse to comply with the rules. The key remaining challenge is to ensure that all the school basics are consistently adhered to. A minority of students seem to think that some rules don't apply to them. Even worse, they are quick to suggest that they have your blessing in refusing to comply. Whilst I know that this is not the case I thought that I would reiterate some of the main non-negotiables.

1. Students need to arrive on time for school. About 15-20 students arrive late on an almost daily basis. School starts at 8.30 a.m. so they need to be on site by 8.25 a.m.
2. All students must come to school fully equipped. Too often a small number of students, mainly boys, don't even have a pen.
3. All students must wear the correct uniform including proper school shoes. Please do not let your child leave the house dressed incorrectly. We have bought a stock of skirts, trousers and shoes that students incorrectly attired will have to wear. If they refuse, you will be contacted to come and collect them. They will not be allowed into lessons. Please note that hoodies are not allowed over or under their blazers. If it is cold, students should wear a coat; however, they must not be worn inside the building.
4. Students need to know their timetable. Everyday some students seem to have no idea what lessons they have and waste time wandering around the school or asking hard pressed administrative staff to print them a copy time and time again.
5. A very small number of students feel that they have the right to leave lessons to go to the toilet or the pastoral leaders and miss vital learning time. Of course, teachers will allow a student to go to the toilet if they have a medical need but at secondary school we expect students to be able to organise themselves during the breaks contained in the school day. The pastoral leaders have specific arrangements with identified students to undertake proactive intervention. Students cannot just take themselves out of lessons and go where they wish. Of course, if there is a genuine need, students should talk to a senior member of staff.

Head teacher: Mr Alex Russell
Telephone: 01256 465547

Oxford Way, Sherborne St John, Basingstoke RG24 9UP
Email: info@everestcommunityacademy.org
www.everestcommunityacademy.org



6. Regrettably, there are a small minority of students who are rude, argumentative and use unacceptable language not only to each other but to members of staff. No one goes to school or to work to be abused. We will continue to deal with such occurrences in the strongest manner.

A few students justify their poor behaviour by suggesting they have permission from home to argue, 'speak their mind' and take matters into their own hands. I realise that this is unlikely and I have been overwhelmed by the support shown by parents and carers; however, we must be united in our mission to make Everest a great school. I have been very open with the shortcomings that were evident at the school when I arrived. We are on an upward trajectory and will not stop until we have a school that:

- Provides an outstanding education in the widest sense.
- Delivers excellent results and gives every child life chances.
- Have students who know how to behave, understand how to support and encourage one another, show respect and kindness and represent the very best of our community.
- Is at the centre of Basingstoke's educational provision and the envy of the other schools.

Finally, I want to make you aware of two new initiatives that we are adopting. Firstly, there is now an agreement amongst all Basingstoke schools that isolations from lessons can take place in a different school. This week we have had a student from Aldworth with us and after half-term one of our students will be attending The Vyne. This means that the hierarchy of measures to sanction bad behaviour are as follows:

1. Short detentions
2. Long detentions
3. Isolations at Everest
4. Isolation at another Basingstoke school
5. Fixed term exclusions
6. Managed move to another Basingstoke school
7. Referral to Ashwood Academy
8. Recommendation for permanent exclusion

I must point out that the punishment will obviously have to reflect the poor behaviour and a student does not necessarily work his or her way up the ladder but I wanted you to be aware of the measures that we now have in place.

Secondly, I have decided to introduce a complete ban on the use of mobile phones and electronic equipment in school. There are similar bans in two other Basingstoke schools and they work to good effect. This does not mean that students cannot have them for use to and from school but once in, they must not. If you need to contact your child please call the school directly. I have outlined my reasons for this and the detail of the policy separately.



Everest
Community Academy
To make our best better



Bourne
Education
Trust

Transforming schools... changing lives

I realise that this seems like a long list of things not to do but if we get them right and support each other without exception then we will have a great school.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Alex Russell
Headteacher

Head teacher: Mr Alex Russell
Telephone: 01256 465547
Oxford Way, Sherborne St John, Basingstoke RG24 9UP
Email: info@everestcommunityacademy.org
www.everestcommunityacademy.org