

July 2019

## Headlines

Dear Parent/Carer,

Once again, we find ourselves at the end of a very busy but rewarding year. This term has seen our Year 11 students leave and our new Year 7s come in for their Transition day events. Parents of our new Year 6 praised the school for our 'outstanding' transition programme and we are delighted to be welcoming a much larger cohort than last year into Year 7. There have been a number of academy highlights: Year 8 students enjoyed a maths trip to Techniquest; our school show 'Hairspray' was a roaring success and played to packed audiences on both nights; and our Dorcan 'Olympic style' Sports day spectacular at the County Ground was once again, superb. These amazing events epitomise teamwork and highlight all that is excellent about The Dorcan Academy. Did I mention that **Eagle House** once again managed to walk away with the Sports day trophy?!!

The term ended with Year 10 going off on work experience – their first taster of life in the real world and Year 7 enjoying a week away at camp in this beautiful weather. Our Year 11 students still talk about their time away at camp as being one of the most memorable in their Dorcan career. On Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July our rewards trip took place to Brean Sands. Students set the criteria for attendance and we are pleased that 201 students met the criteria. A great time was had by all. Our last but one day of term sees our Final Rewards assembly to be held in the Netball dome which was a superb event last year and an opportunity for all the Houses to get together for some healthy competition. It remains to be seen which House will win the end of Year cup!

### Good news

We are delighted to announce that Mrs Joy Smith, our Head of English and Mr Andrew Robinson, our lead practitioner in Science have been nominated for and successfully achieved a Swindon Teacher of the year award. Also, our pastoral team have achieved a best practice award for their role in significantly improving the behaviour at Dorcan so that it is now judged good by Ofsted. Congratulations in particular go to Mrs Mel Shepherd, Mrs Tina May and Mrs Julia Cox who lead our pastoral team.

### Literacy highlights

Last week 16 of our students took part in a 'Riveting Read' event with Kingsdown, organised by Ms Murphy our librarian, which was a great opportunity for avid readers to share their passion for literature. On Friday 5 July we held our first 'Harry Potter day' which saw students dressing up in their favourite Harry Potter characters and taking part in lessons exploring themes from the books. Students competed to decorate the doors of their classrooms. Thanks go to Ms Strange for organising this excellent event.

Please find a link to Swindon libraries Summer Reading challenge which launches on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July and is a perfect way to encourage students to keep reading over the holidays.

<https://swindonlibraries.wordpress.com/childrens-services/summer-reading-challenge/>

Swindon Central library is also hosting a couple of events with award-winning, young adult author Taran Matharu at the end of July: 31<sup>st</sup> July from 10-11am and 11:30 – 1pm. Taran is extremely popular,

especially with reluctant boy readers age 9-13 and therefore this is an ideal opportunity for students to be inspired to continue reading or writing throughout the summer break.

### **Student leaders**

On the first day of term in September (Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>), all Year 11 student leaders, including Head boy and girl, Deputy Head boy and girl and all prefects will be required in school to support the Year 7 induction to arrive at 8:30am. Also, on this day we will be providing them with some leadership training to support them in their roles throughout the year.

### **Building work**

Over the summer we are going to be undertaking some exciting renovations. We are relocating our SEND department to the current Global learning area and have received £96,000 of funding to make this a bespoke specialist area, including accommodation and facilities to support deaf students within the local area.

We are also planning to change the entrance to the school to make it safer, as well as more welcoming and user-friendly. Students will only have access via one main entrance at the front of the school by the bicycle sheds.

### **Uniform**

Thank you to everyone who has donated old uniform to us. These will be used to either pass on to other needy students or, to loan to students who are without an item of uniform temporarily.

Please make a point of reading our uniform guidelines on the academy website thoroughly before buying new uniform for the new school year. During the summer months, we do see the standards slip a little, mainly due to the hot weather, but in September our high standards will be enforced again with rigour. It is important that students do not have anything done over the summer holiday that will break the uniform policy on their return. For example, if students wish to have false nails, can I recommend that they are done at the start of the holidays and removed at the end; also, hair colours and cuts. We only accept natural hair colourings and traditional hairstyles. We do not allow shaved heads, even partially – the shortest cut allowed is a no. 2 and we do not accept tramlines. So please be aware of these aspects in particular. We do not allow nose piercings, or any other piercings apart from in the ear, where students may wear one small stud ear-ring in each ear lobe. Failure to remove any items which do not conform to the policy will result in isolation.

Thank you for supporting us to remain the smartest school in Swindon.

### **Equipment**

If your child is entering Year 10 or 11 next year they will need to provide, in addition to the usual items, **a ring binder folder** to house their Knowledge organisers for each subject which will be provided.

As a reminder, the equipment required is shown below:

- A school bag – large enough to carry A4 files
- Scientific calculator (we recommend Casio fx-83GT PLUS)
- Link book – provided by the school
- Knowledge organiser – provided by the school for students in Years 7, 8 and 9

- A reading book
- A Pencil case containing:
  - At least two black pens
  - A green pen
  - At least two pencils
  - Ruler
  - Rubber
  - Pencil sharpener
  - Compass and protractor

Desirable:

- Coloured crayons/pencils – not felt tips
- English language pocket dictionary

### **Events during the holidays**

Please find attached the latest Aiming High Newsletter, which includes information about activities during the Summer holidays and an advert for a Musical Theatre Summer School taking place from 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> August at Potterne Village Hall.

### **Parent governors**

We are delighted to have had some interest in our parent governor vacancies, details of which you will be informed of in September. If you wish to be considered please contact Anne Cleary, Clerk to the Governors, at the academy. ([governors@dorcan.co.uk](mailto:governors@dorcan.co.uk)). Particularly useful would be skills and background in HR, Finance, Law, Social care and Education.

### **Dates for your diary - Autumn term 2019**

- **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September – 4:30 – 6pm** An opportunity to meet your child's teachers in the dining room, followed by a Parents' forum from **6-7pm**. We would like to hear your views as to what you would like us to offer to parents to enable you to support your children to maximise their potential, so please come with your ideas. There will also be the opportunity to hear about our plans for the coming year.
- **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October – 5:30 – 7:20pm** Core Skills evening – Supporting your child in KS4 English, Maths and Science
- **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October – 5:30 – 6:15pm** How to help your child revise
- **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November** – Year 7 and 8 Parents' evening
- **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December – 3:30 – 5pm** Drop in clinic. Come in for a chat over a drink and a mince pie and then stay on to our Parents' forum from **5 – 6pm**.
- **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December** – Christmas concert: an evening of music, drama and dance
- **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December** – Join us for our Carol Service which is a joint event between the academy and Gateway church.

### **Staff leavers and new staff**

As always, we are sorry to be saying goodbye to some members of staff who are moving on to pastures new in September. We thank them for their contribution to the academy and for going the extra mile for our students and wish them every success for the future.

Special thanks go to Mrs Smith (Head of English) and Mrs Archer (Exams Officer) who are both retiring this summer after 35 years and nearly 24 years of service respectively and to Mrs Pakenham (Designated Safeguarding Lead) who is leaving for a new challenge after 32 years of service.

Mr Cannon (Head of Year 7) and Mrs Abbott (Head of Osprey) are moving to take up jobs in the independent sector. Mr Roy and Miss O'Shea (Maths) have both secured posts nearer to home whilst Mr Ryan-Youett (Product Design and Skills for Life) is moving into the primary sector. Mr Llewellyn (Global) and Ms Garcia Rodriguez are both moving on to pastures new after their first year in teaching whilst Mrs Matthews and Ms Robertson, Teaching Assistants, are both moving on to new posts. Ms Madylus is not going to be returning following her recent maternity leave and we would like to wish Miss Parker, Technician all the very best as she goes on maternity leave.

We are glad to be welcoming some fantastic new staff. Miss Derewicz has been appointed as Head of English and Media; Miss Ross is returning to us as our Deputy Safeguarding Lead, English and Vocational teacher; Mr Waldron will be Head of Year 7; Miss Creed-Miles as Science teacher including STEM; Mrs Tchoya, Mrs Causer and Miss Butterworth in Maths; Miss Gaston in English; Miss Pearce and Miss Hartland in Global learning and Mrs Dudgeon in Art. We also welcome back Miss Trigg following her recent maternity leave.

In-house promotions:

Mr Morgans is moving up to become our second Deputy Head. Mrs Shepherd will lead on all matters Pastoral, while Mr Morgans will lead on academic issues. Ms Morley will continue to be Director of Teaching and Learning.

Mr Child (Head of Eagle) will become our new Designated Safeguarding Lead and be responsible for whole school attendance. As such he will be joining our Extended Senior Leadership team. Mr Tanner will become Head of Year 11 in addition to his role as Head of History and Head of Character (including student leadership). He will also continue to be on our Extended leadership team. Mr Corkish (Head of Art) will also become Acting Head of Osprey House.

We wish you all a lovely summer break; stay safe and we look forward to seeing **Year 7** on their first day, **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September at 8:30am** along with **Year 11 student leaders only**, Years 7 and the whole of Year 11 on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September and the rest of the school on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Sherryl Bareham  
Headteacher

## Free School Meals

### Dear Parents and Carers

#### Did you know that your child could qualify for Free School Meals?

If your child is eligible, it means they can enjoy delicious, healthy meals without the bills and fuss of making packed lunches. Many students at The Dorcan Academy are already enjoying Free School Meals, and your child may be entitled to have them too, if you receive one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided that you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get Free School Meals

As well as having a free hot or cold lunch every day, students who are eligible for Free School Meals enable the school to receive additional funding to spend on extra resources for your child, such as revision classes.

The Dorcan Academy actively encourages all families entitled to Free School Meals to make a claim. No-one else will know that your child qualifies for Free School Meals, as we use a cashless system that means that payment is discreet. Your child's catering account is topped up automatically with **£2.00** every day. This may be spent on any item in the canteen, at either breakfast break or lunch. Please note that students cannot 'save up' their allowance and that, once the allowance is reached, any further purchases must be funded by parental 'top up'.

If you would like to apply for Free School Meals for your child, you can check your eligibility and apply directly via [https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20032/schools\\_and\\_education/408/free\\_school\\_meals](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20032/schools_and_education/408/free_school_meals)

Should your application be successful, please email Mrs Titcombe (details below) to ensure that our records are updated so your child can start to receive their allowance as quickly as possible. The council do not always advise us of eligibility, so this is the quickest way to make sure that your child can take advantage of their eligibility as soon as possible.

Should you require any assistance with your application, please contact Mrs Titcombe on 01793 525231 or [rtitcombe@dorcan.co.uk](mailto:rtitcombe@dorcan.co.uk).