



Penistone Grammar School Advanced Learning Centre Never Stop Flying

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Achieving Excellence through a Values Driven Education

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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you all managed to enjoy the extended bank holiday weekend, particularly with the bonus of the beautiful, sunny weather. Hopefully this has helped to re-energise our students as they prepare for the coming school weeks.

I would like to begin by wishing, on behalf of all the staff at PGS, the best of luck to every one of our year 11 and year 13 students who will commence their final, external, written examinations on Monday 14 May. We are confident that the hard work, commitment and dedication demonstrated by our students to their studies over recent weeks will be all be worthwhile and will result in inevitable success. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you, as their parents and carers, for your continued support during this important period.

As I informed you in my previous correspondence, planning for September is well underway and I would now like to inform you of one important change we will be making in relation to tutor time.

As you are aware, currently for tutor time students are grouped vertically, with a mixture of students from years 7 to 11 in each tutor group. This arrangement has been in place for many years and has been integral to our school ethos and to the promotion of our core values. However; over the period since vertical tutoring was introduced, the challenges our children face have increased, not only in relation to their social and personal education, but also in terms of the rigour and demands of the new examination and assessment regime. We believe that tutor time plays a critical part in the support we provide for our young people, and if we are to do this effectively, a change is needed. We have therefore taken the decision to move to a horizontal structure from September 2018.

A move to a horizontal structure means that students will be grouped with others from the same year group only. We have carefully considered the organisational and planning requirements in moving students from the current structure to the new; I would like to reassure you that our priority will be to keep children with others from the same year group whom they have previously chosen to be with. We will then focus on creating balanced tutor groups, looking at key dynamics including gender and the mix of ability.

We are keen to ensure parents have an opportunity to discuss the changes with us and we will be holding an **Information Evening** on **22 May 2018** at **18:00** to facilitate this. On the evening there will be a brief presentation looking at the rationale behind the decision, together with the logistics and organisation which will underpin the move from vertical to horizontal. This will be followed by an open forum which will provide you with an opportunity to offer opinions or ask any questions you may have regarding the change. You can sign up to attend the Information Evening via the following link https://tutor_time.eventbrite.co.uk.

I can confirm that students in years 7 to 10 have been informed of the change today in assemblies.

Before I end, I would like to send the following colleagues our best wishes; Mr Kellett (PE Technician) has left us to pursue alternative career opportunities and two long-serving colleagues, Mrs Brookes-Ashton (Head of Admissions and Transition) and Mrs Taylor (Learning Support Assistant) leave us to start their retirement.

We also say a temporary “farewell” to Miss Bettey (Head of Art) and Mrs Ogden (Student Support Officer: Year 11) who take a sabbatical from Penistone as they await the arrival of their new babies. In Miss Bettey’s absence, Mr Berry will be covering the post of Curriculum Area Leader for Art, with Mrs Birch stepping up to Second in Department.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Crook". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paul Crook
Principal

