



Penistone Grammar School Advanced Learning Centre Never Stop Flying

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Achieving Excellence through a Values Driven Education

Ref: PCR/CMA

Date: 20 July 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

Where has the time gone? It feels like only yesterday I was appointed as Principal, yet here we are at the end of the school year ... and what a year it has been! The theme for the final half term has been rewarding and recognising the achievements of our students. There are many highlights to my job, but this is always my favourite part.

We took time away from school for end of year proms, initially with year 11, and then with our year 13 students. Both events provided a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the end of an incredibly demanding examination period, to reflect on all our students had achieved during their time at PGS and to think about the potential of what will come next. To our year 11 and year 13 students; as we wait with anticipation to see what your summer examination results hold, please know that it has been a privilege to have you as part of our learning community. We are extremely proud of you all, and of the young adults you have become.

This year saw the introduction of our Excellence Awards. For those of you who may not be aware, for each year group (years 7 to 10) colleagues from across school were given the opportunity to nominate students for awards in different categories. These included individual subject recognition awards for excellence, as well as our prestigious core value awards: the 'Aim High' award for excellent academic progress; the 'Be Determined' award for consistently high effort; the 'Be Brave' award for determination in the face of challenge; the 'Be Supportive' award for contribution to school life and the 'Be Proud' award for excellent academic achievement. Students who had been nominated were invited, with two guests, to our 'Excellence Awards' breakfast event at the beginning of July where they were presented with a custom-designed pin badge and a goodie bag in recognition of their achievement. The Excellence Awards will be an annual initiative and I'm already looking forward to next year. Details of the winners of this year's awards will be on our website shortly.

At the beginning of July, we also had opportunity to celebrate with the students who will become our new year 7 from September 2018. As we met with them and their families, we took time to recognise the amazing way in which they had approached their transition into secondary school, evidencing already their commitment to our core values. As our new students now officially become our Class of 2023, we are excited to see all the great things they will achieve over the coming years.

There have also been celebrations for students in Bowman House who, for the second year running, have won the House cup and trip to Alton Towers. Congratulations to all Bowman students, to Mr Clegg (Head of House) and to his team of tutors. To students in Fulford, Netherfield, Saunderson and Weirfield Houses; you will need to aim high and show real determination next year if you're going to stop Bowman securing the hatrick!

As well as individual and group achievements, we are also celebrating as a school. In June we received notification that we had achieved the National Quality in Careers Standard Award. Only 25% of schools in the Country hold this accolade and it is testament to the dedication of colleagues across school that we have been able to secure this. There are many people who have contributed, but particular thanks must go to

Mr Green (Assistant Principal: Student Ethos and Values) for his overall coordination and to Mrs Rostern (Assistant Head of Post-16) for her focussed work at Post-16.

Every member of staff at PGS brings their own unique contribution to our school community and it is always with sadness at this time of year that we say farewell to those who leave us to start new adventures. In 2018 that includes the retirement of our two longest serving colleagues; Mrs Eadon (Administrator) and Mrs Shaw (Finance Manager), who have been with the school 41 and 40 years respectfully. In the summer Mr Satur (Second in Department: Mathematics), Miss Mooney (Teacher of Languages) and Miss Crowley (Teacher of PE) all leave Penistone to travel and work abroad while Miss Demetriou (Teacher of English), Mr Brook (Lead Practitioner: School Direct/English) and Mrs Neeve (Lead Practitioner: School Direct/Mathematics) move on to different roles and new challenges.

The summer also brings the end of fixed term contracts for Mr Beresford (Cover Supervisor), Mr Waller (Cover Supervisor), Mr Minton (Teacher of Enterprise) and Miss Mattingley-Nunn (Teacher of Technology and Art); we send our thanks for their contribution during their time with us. We also say goodbye to colleagues from our Associate team; Mrs Akers (Student Support Officer for Year 10), Mrs Fraser (Cover Supervisor) and Mrs Ward (Receptionist). Finally, we say a temporary farewell to Mrs Dobson (Curriculum Area Leader: History) and Mrs Harpham (Teacher of Technology), who both take a short break from PGS as they await the arrival of new additions to their families.

We hope all colleagues leave with fond memories of their time at Penistone and take with them our very best wishes for a future filled with happiness and success.

As we move with pace towards the 2018/19 academic year we look to build on the success of this year and to deliver on the promises I made to you when I took up post.

As I have outlined previously, the mental health and wellbeing of our students and staff is incredibly important to me. With the support of our Foundation Governors, I am extremely pleased to let you know that we are enhancing the ways in which we provide mental health support for our students. Mental health problems are an endemic issue facing schools across the country and at PGS we have focused our approach to mental health support in four key areas: Promoting mental wellbeing by creating an environment where children and young people feel safe and happy; identifying students' specific mental health needs; providing mental health support for students with particular needs; and referring in to and/or delivering specialist therapeutic provision.

In real terms, in addition to the measures we already have in school, we are implementing the following:

- A member of the leadership team is undertaking a Master's degree in 'Leadership of School Mental Health and Wellbeing' to ensure we have an expert in school at the highest level.
- A member of our pastoral team is undertaking training as a counsellor to enable us to facilitate high quality, bespoke therapeutic support designed to meet the specific needs of our individual students.
- All members of the pastoral team are undertaking mental health awareness training to ensure we can identify where support is needed at the earliest opportunity.
- We are increasing both the range and availability of mental health intervention and support mechanisms available to us, including the commissioning of an Art Therapist.
- Each department in school will have a fully trained 'Wellbeing Ambassador' to ensure we are able to promote positive mental health at every level.
- We are working in collaboration with Sheffield University's medical students to introduce a series of mental health and anti-bullying days, promoting positive mental health across our school community.
- We will be further embedding and enhancing mental health awareness within our PSHE curriculum.

This is an ambitious plan led by Mr Gillett (Assistant Principal) that will put Penistone at the forefront of mental health support. Our students deserve nothing less than this.

From September, we will be making changes to our policy around the use of mobile phones which we believe will also have a positive impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our students. Currently students are not permitted to use their mobile phones inside the school building however; during breaks and lunches, they



can use their phones outside the school building. More and more we are seeing students spending their social time on their phones, checking social media accounts, playing games and messaging, rather than enjoying each other's company and spending time together. We have no proactive way of ensuring our students' use of mobile phones in this time is appropriate and increasingly we find mobile phones play a key factor when investigate bullying incidents. In addition, the number of sanctions issued for the use of mobile phones inside the building in 2017/18 increased, with over 270 phones confiscated and detentions given.

As a result, from September the rules around the use of mobile phones will change:

- Students will not be permitted to use mobile phones between the hours of 08:20 and 14:50 on the school site, **including in outside areas.**
- Between the hours of 08:00 to 08:20 and 14:50 to 15:00 students are only permitted to use their mobile phone outside the school building.
- All mobile phones must be switched off and stored in either the student's bag or locker.
- Students will not be permitted to carry their mobile phone on their person, including in their pockets, between 08:20 and 14:50.

There may be circumstances when a student will need to contact home during the school day. Where this is the case, students should go to main reception where they will be permitted to use the school's phone.

If a mobile phone is in sight, heard or used contrary to the expectations set out above, the sanctions will remain the same as they are currently. The phone will be confiscated, a 2-hour SLT detention will be issued for the following Friday and the student will lose a line. Students will be able to collect any confiscated phone at the end of the school day from main reception.

We strongly believe that this change can only have a positive impact upon the experience of our students and I thank you in advance for your support. Should you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us via email to enquiries@penistone-gs.uk.

In terms of next year, I have enclosed the key dates for your diaries. This information will also be available in student planners, on Frog and on our website. Just a reminder that students in years 7, 10, 11 and 12 will return to school on **Wednesday 5 September 2018**, with students in years 8, 9 and 13 joining them from **Thursday 6 September**.

As we prepare to bring the year to a close with our Penfest celebrations this afternoon, I'd like to thank you as parents and carers for the warmth with which you've welcomed me as Principal and for your support over the months since my appointment in November. I'd also like to take an opportunity to thank my leadership team, staff and members of our Governing Body for their dedication to our vision and to our core values in all they do.

Please take every opportunity to enjoy your summer, make the most of the sunshine and I look forward to welcoming our students back in September, and to working with you over the course of 2018/19.

Yours sincerely



Paul Crook
Principal

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