



Penistone Grammar School

Never Stop Flying

Principal: Mr P Crook (B.Ed Hons)
Huddersfield Road, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 7BX
www.penistone-gs.uk
enquiries@penistone-gs.uk
01226 762114
@PGSALC



Achieving Excellence through a Values Driven Education

Ref: CMA/PCR

Date: 1 October 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

I start my letter to you this half-term with an important plea to all those parents and carers who collect students at the end of the school day.

At Penistone we do our best to provide an education that is inclusive for all our students, regardless of their context. For most students attending school is relatively straightforward, but for an increasing number of our students there are barriers that mean this is a challenge. For some students this barrier is physical, and to support their attendance at school it is essential that they can access our disabled parking spaces at the front of the building. This is becoming difficult as parents and carers are using these spaces to wait for their children at the end of the school day.

I would be grateful if anyone collecting students from school at the end of the day could refrain from using the disabled spaces, including for waiting purposes, unless they have a Blue Badge (issued under the Blue Badge Scheme). We will have no alternative but to ask anyone who does not have a Blue Badge to move their vehicle, so we can keep these spaces free for those who need to access them. I thank you in advance for your support; I would be grateful if you could pass this message on to friends, grandparents or anyone else who may collect students from school.

The summer seems such a long time ago now, but it brought so much to celebrate. Our classes of 2018, both Year 13 and Year 11, excelled themselves. As well as the success we achieved collectively as a school, there were also many individual examples of success. Whether that be students who overcame self-doubt to achieve far more than they ever believed possible, students who made progress that was way above that of their peers in other schools nationally, or students who overcame adversity to make it across the finish line and complete their exams, when at times this seemed an unsurmountable task, we are extremely proud of them all.

We will continue to celebrate the success of last year's cohort as we move towards Christmas through various celebration events however; I would just like to share one particular story with you. On results day, we had one student who received an almost perfect scorecard for his GCSE examinations, with nearly all elite Grade 9s and just one Grade 8. This student is incredibly ambitious and worked tirelessly, striving to achieve the top grades. Despite huge cause for personal celebration on results day, he could not hide his disappointment with the Grade 8.



We are now extremely pleased to be able to let you know that, following a remark, the Grade 8 has been uplifted to a Grade 9 by the Examination Board. We send our congratulations to Jamie Butler, do not underestimate what an achievement this is; Jamie joins a very elite group of students across the Country who have achieved top grades in every GCSE subject studied ... well done!

The results achieved by our Year 13 students in the summer have placed our Post-16 Centre in the top 1% of providers nationally, according to ALPs (Advanced Level Performance System). Over 46% of all grades achieved were grades A* or A and more than 97% of our students were able to secure their university place or apprenticeship of choice. We will be celebrating all that is great about our Post-16 Centre at our Post-16 Open Evening, taking place on 8 November from 18:00 to 20:00. If you're interested in finding out more about what we offer for students after GCSEs, please come along on the evening, I would love to see you there.

In September we welcomed our new Year 7 students into our learning community. Our Class of 2023 are record-breakers for the school, as they are the largest cohort we have ever accommodated, at 320 students. They have made an amazing start and settled in really well to their life at PGS. I am excited to see what they will all achieve and already they are making a really positive contribution to our school.

Although the start to the new year academic year has been fantastic, it has not been without its challenges. The building work that should have been completed over the summer was unfortunately delayed and we are still waiting for the two additional Science classrooms to be completed, expected over the next two weeks. Our students have demonstrated just what resilient learners they are, adapting quickly to changes to timetables and, on occasion, unconventional rooming. I am grateful to them for their patience.

We are also aware that there have been significant issues in September with the buses, and I'd like to thank those of you who have sent in your comments and concerns regarding this to school. We are calling a meeting with Barnsley Local Authority, Admissions and the bus companies to look at how this situation can be improved moving forwards, particularly given the increasing student population over the next 4 years. All the information you have shared with us has been extremely useful in providing real examples of the issues faced. If anyone has any further information they would like to make us aware of directly in relation to buses, we would be grateful to receive this via email to enquiries@penistone-gs.uk by Friday 5 October 2018.

Although we have only just welcomed our new year 7 students to Penistone, arrangements are already underway in terms of those students who will join us from September 2019. The first opportunity we have to meet our Class of 2024 is at our Open Evening, taking place on Thursday 11 October 2018. We have lots of exciting things planned for our prospective students and their parents/carers on the evening, which will begin at 18:00 and run through until 20:00, including treasure hunts, department activities and food tasting. Our Open Evenings always prove to be a great success, and a real highlight of our school calendar. Your child may have brought home a letter to help on the evening, if this is the case, we would be grateful if you could complete the reply slip and return it to school at your earliest convenience; our students are pivotal to making the evening a success. Again, if you are attending on the evening, I will look forward to meeting you there.

In September, a number of new colleagues joined Penistone and I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce them to you. On our associate staff team, Mrs Atkinson has taken up the post of Attendance Assistant, Miss Sharp joins us as Receptionist, Mr Gregory is supporting our PE Department as Technician, Mr Smythe joins our Cover Team, Miss Wilson is our new Student Support Officer for Year 11 and Mrs Wainwright joins our Learning Support Team.



On our teaching staff, Miss Campbell-Smith and Miss Parkes (Teachers of Technology), Mrs Demetriou, Mr Jenkins and Miss O'Brien (Teachers of English), Miss Downing (Teacher of PE), Miss Franco and Miss Pennington-Edwards (Teachers of Languages), Miss Garth (Teacher of Maths), Miss Helliwell and Miss Watmough (Teachers of Art) and Mr Sims (Teacher of History) all joined us on the first day of the new academic year, together with Mr Steele, who has taken up the post of Second in Department: Maths.

There have also been some changes to responsibilities across school. Mr Berry and Mrs Birch step up to cover as Curriculum Area Leader and Second in Department respectively in Art during Mrs Betty's maternity leave, as do Mrs Godden and Miss Clayton in History during Mrs Dobson's maternity leave. In Science, Mr Unwin has been appointed as Second in Department and Miss Pickersgill will be supporting leadership of the department with a specific focus on Biology. In our Post-16 Centre, Miss Crossland will take up the new post of Leader of Learning, and in terms of our House system, Miss Spaven is now our Lead Head of House with Mr Stevenson leading Saunderson and Mr Edwards leading Weirfield until Mrs Harpham takes over when she returns from maternity leave.

Following the return to horizontal tutoring, in order to ensure we are effectively supporting students in their learning and academically, we have also introduced a new role into our staffing structure: Achievement Leader. The role of the Achievement Leader is to create a climate and ethos for success that supports students to achieve and to become the best version of themselves they can be, ensuring they leave us equipped for success beyond Penistone Grammar School.

Achievement Leaders will work collaboratively with the Inclusion Team, alongside Student Support Officers and will enable us to ensure every aspect of a student's learning and wellbeing is supported. The Achievement Mentors are Mrs Martin (Year 7), Mr Dowle (Year 8), Mr Squires (Year 9), Mr Archer (Year 10) and Mr Schofield (Year 11).

For enquiries relating to progress, parents can contact the Achievement Leader through the progress@pensitone-gs.uk email address. All pastoral queries should still be directed to the Student Support Officer via the inclusion@penistone-gs.uk email.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Crook
Principal

