

McMillan Message

October 2018

Principal: Mr Wesley Davies

Dear Families

Principal's Message

Our new term has gone very well so far. We have had to adapt some systems and protocols now that we are at our full capacity as a school, with over 720 scholars on roll and benefitting from a Dixons McMillan education. The scholars have adapted well to the changes and how full the academy feels. Attendance is currently just under 97%, not quite at our expectation but in line with where we have been at this point in the year. We are about to complete Cycle 1 Assessments which will shape our next catch up and morning mastery classes. I know all our families want our scholars to achieve their very best, and I thank you in advance for supporting morning mastery, catch – up and co – curricular sessions. These sessions are compulsory and all families were told this clearly on accepting a place at Dixons McMillan.

Over summer, our new website was launched. It has a modern feel and should be easier for families to navigate on a range of devices. Please do keep your eye on the twitter feed as we regularly update this with messages and to celebrate the achievements of scholars. The website also details our staffing list and areas of responsibilities for your information.

In response to scholar voice last year the academy made the following changes this year:

- introduction of a new winter academy jacket
- 100% folders for Years 9 – 11
- business lunch for Year 11
- increasing the range of co – curricular electives to include things such as martial arts

In response to family voice we have:

- maintained our regular parental engagement sessions
- introduced parent pay appointments with Mr Welch on Thursday and Friday mornings, 08:05 – 09:00
- increased the amount of staff on duty on the road and surrounding streets at the end of the school day

We have a busy and important year ahead of us as we will be entering the Class of 2021 for their GCSE results. As our defining year group, they have an incredible amount of pressure to do well but I know with the academy's support and parental support, we can achieve some of the best results in the country.

Our focus this year is to close in – school relative gaps by making all subjects are great as our highest performing subjects and ensuring our boys are as exceptional as our girls. As always families can support scholars through ensuring they are in school and fully equipped to learn before 08:00 each day. On an evening families should read with scholars and quiz them using their 100% sheets. The new reformed GCSEs demand scholars have a secure knowledge base to be successful.

Finally, I would like to thank families for attending the recent progress event to meet advisors and coaches. It was a lovely evening and I am always humbled by the support the academy gets from our families. Our family surveys were incredibly positive with almost all families agreeing that children feel safe and are well taught. This is an impressive achievement for us all.

Duke of Edinburgh

During the dates of the 21st and 22nd of September, the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh cohort completed their assessed expeditions. The Bronze scholars impressively navigated themselves independently over a gruelling 18 kilometres in a single day. The scholars started at Hawkswick Cote in Settle and finished at Horton in Ribblesdale where the scholars spent the night. All scholars demonstrated real grit and determination whilst using the Academy's values and drivers to help them complete the expedition. All scholars passed with flying colours and we look forward to hosting a celebration event to present scholars with their certificates.

Class of 2025 & Ullswater

It has been a very positive start for the Class of 2025. Scholars are getting used to the differences between primary school and secondary school, and we are seeing fewer and fewer scholars forgetting equipment or homework. Scholars should remember to keep checking their timetables so that they have the correct equipment for each day and each lesson. They all have a homework timetable in their planner showing which subject's homework is due into the box, in order to support them. I would encourage families to work with scholars and ensure they are using their 100% book to consolidate knowledge at home.

Our attendance is excellent – close to 97%. This is a great achievement and one which will make us one of the best year groups in the whole country! Scholars need to continue to make sure that they attend school every day in order to make the most progress possible and climb their mountain.

Ullswater will give scholars the opportunity to strengthen their relationships with others – be that staff or other scholars. We will take part in a wide range of outdoor activities, broadening our experiences and connecting us to the wider world. For some scholars, this may be the first time that they are on their own away from home and we will do our utmost to support them during the trip. The residential will give scholars the opportunity to further demonstrate their positivity, can-do attitude and growth mind-set as they try new experiences and activities. A fantastic time will be had by all.

If any families have any queries in regards to their child, do not hesitate to contact the academy and ask to speak to their advisor in the first instance.

Uniform scheme

In response to a parent idea we are launching a new uniform scheme. Please send any old items of uniform to reception and we then give these items to other scholars to re – use. We are suggesting a donation of £2 per item, which will then be given to charity. If you require an item of uniform, please tell your child to ask if we have any items donated that match their size. We will then have a donation box for the donation to be put into.

Free School Meal entitlement

Please see below information taken from the Bradford government website regarding free school meal entitlement. Further information can be found at: <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/applying-for-benefits/free-school-meals/>

Can I apply for free school meals?

You can apply for school meals if you receive:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £16,190, provided they are not receiving Working Tax Credit
- the 'Guaranteed' element of the State Pension Credit

- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (you will need to apply directly to the school or call the Education Service on 01274 439393)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income threshold of less than £7,400

The way to apply is to use our online form. We can tell you straight away if you qualify. Please note, you may not be able to apply via our online form if you fall into these categories:

- if your child attends a school outside the Bradford area - apply to the local authority where the school is
- if your child goes to Appleton Academy, Bradford Academy or a further education college - contact the school to apply
- for new communities people (such as asylum seekers) and for travellers - call the Education Service on 01274 439393

Please note that previous entitlement does not guarantee current so please check your entitlement.

British Science Festival Visit

Thirty-one Year 13 scholars attended the British Science Festival at the University of Hull on 11th September. Since its inception in 1831, this annual Festival has been the site of many pivotal moments in science history, bringing together the top UK scientific researchers, broadcasters and communicators to explore the wonders of research, culture and beyond. DMA scholars heard from a wide range of researchers, including a doctor whose work in the remote conditions of Antarctica is being used to study the effects of space on astronauts' health; an engineer who designs life-improving medical tools that are changing patient care; and several expert multidisciplinary teams who were reporting their research on childbirth, cancer treatment and pain management.

Design Technology Mountain Climbers

The DT department staff have chosen the following scholars to show recognition for their excellence in DT by awarding them the DT Cycle 3 mountain climbers. Well Done!

Sabiha Shaikh 11X – Design Technology

Isa Rehman 9X – Textiles

Mihm Haydar 10X – Art

Yusuf Tariq 9X – Food

Key Dates

19th October 2018 Academy closes for Half Term

5th November 2018 Academy re-opens

19th November Data Day

I would like to wish all scholars and their families a safe and relaxing half term break.

With kind regards

W.J. Davies .

Wesley Davies
Principal