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Autumn update 2019

Dear parents and carers

Welcome back to the new school year at Fairfield! We are especially pleased to see so many new students in Year 7 and in other years, and are glad to welcome them all into the Fairfield Family. This year we are also welcoming Mr Price to teach Maths, Mr van Es to teach Science, Mr Kerr as Science Technician and Miss Robb to teach MFL. If you have any concerns or need to let us know anything confidential, please talk to Miss Harold for Year 7, your child's form tutor or Mrs Hart and Mr Chappell, our Learning Managers, in the first instance.

GCSE results

We were pleased to celebrate some very good results with our students on GCSE results day. Our Year 11 students worked hard and have all been able to go on to the college or apprenticeship of their choice. Thanks and congratulations are also due to all the staff who worked together to create the best possible learning environment for our students, challenging and supporting them to succeed.

Improvements to the site

Over the holidays we have created additional toilet facilities for both boys and girls, and a number of areas have been refurbished. We have also improved the wifi and some of the computer equipment. We continue to look at how we can improve our facilities for students, on a limited budget!

Uniform

Thank you for sending your child to school correctly dressed and properly equipped. This really helps us to get on with the business of teaching and learning, rather than have to nag about uniform. We continue to be strict about uniform, hair, phones and piercings; students know the regulations and support from home helps us to reinforce them with minimum fuss.

Traffic

We remain concerned about the volume of traffic at the beginning and especially the end of the school day. We operate an unofficial 'one way' system at the beginning and end of the day, which helps to keep our children safe, and we would be grateful if all parents and carers could follow it. Please do not drop off or pick up your child from the car park or at the main school gate as this is used by both cars and pedestrians. Please use the top gate; I know that at the end of the day it can become very congested due to the buses waiting, but this is only for 10-15 minutes. A member of staff walks down the lane with students every day and supervises safety across the road. In addition, we are regularly asked by the Parish Council to remind parents and carers not to block the main road or driveways through the village, so if you can bear this in mind, it will be appreciated.

Reporting to parents and carers

We continually look at our processes to try and find a good balance between keeping you informed and making staff workload manageable. Following analysis of last year's low attendance figures, we are no longer going to run Parents' Surgeries each half term. We will instead have two full Parents' Evenings for each year group, where you can make appointments to see your child's teachers. We are of course happy to be contacted at any time during the year if you would like to come in and discuss any concerns. In addition, we will be sending home three data reports each year so that you can monitor your child's progress, with a final summary report from their form tutor at the end of the year. All these dates are on the school calendar which has been emailed home to years 8-10 and paper copies given to Year 7. The calendar is also on our website and is updated there if needed.

Communication

We will shortly be sending home some important forms asking for information which we have to have as part of GDPR/Data Protection. It is *absolutely essential* that we hold up to date contact numbers etc (please ensure that we have at least three!) in case we need to contact you urgently, but we would also like to send more information to you (such as this letter) via email so it is really important that we have your permission to do this. Our website, Twitter feed, Instagram and FaceBook accounts are regularly updated with information too. We also recommend that you download the MySchool app – its free and enables us to send out information quickly and easily.

When the paperwork comes home please send it back as quickly as possible!

Attendance

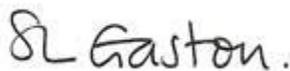
We saw an improvement in attendance at the end of last year – thank you for your support with this. However, our attendance figures are still lower than we would like. There is considerable evidence that poor attendance impacts directly on attainment, especially in Key Stage 4. Any requests for planned absence must be made in advance on the correct form; we will always check on any absences not agreed and we monitor attendance closely. If we have concerns we will ask to meet with you to discuss your child's attendance, and we work closely with the local authority to ensure children are in school.

Get involved!

If you would like to become more involved with the life of the school, the PTA would love to have you! Mindful of the busy lives we all lead now we try to keep any commitment manageable. If you would like further details please contact the school in the first instance.

I look forward to working in partnership with you all for another happy and successful year.

Best wishes



Sue Gaston
Head Teacher