

20 July 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

### **End of Term Newsletter – July 2015**

As the summer term draws to a finish, and at the end of my first three terms as Principal at Outwood Academy Bydales, I wanted to write to thank you for all your support during a very intense year of change. It is a great privilege to work with your sons and daughters, alongside a talented and dedicated team of teachers and support staff. I am under no illusion that our rate of improvement is down to everyone working together for the benefit of our young people, as they are hopefully inspired to strive for the very best outcomes and future careers. I am blessed with such a committed team of staff who work so hard. I am intensely proud of our students as they continue to be so friendly, polite, good-humoured, positive and enthusiastic, and willing to grab all the opportunities we offer. It is a pleasure to read out letters of praise from the local community in assemblies, and pass on the overwhelmingly positive observations of our many visitors to the school. Your sons and daughters are a real credit to you.

### **Term Dates 2015-2016**

Autumn Term starts promptly on Wednesday 2 September at 8.20am for a lesson start of 8.25am. Term dates are always available via our website: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/term-dates>

### **GCSE Results Day**

Year 11 GCSE Results Day is on Thursday 20 August between 10.00 and 11.00am, where students can come into school to collect their grades. This includes students from other year groups who have sat GCSE examinations this summer. The CD of official photographs from the Prom will also be available for collection. Careers advisors will be on hand to support students with any changes to post-16 study destinations, as will Post-16 college providers.

### **Year 6 Transition**

We welcomed our new students on the 1 July and they have been with us right up until the end of the summer term. This arrangement is a first for the school, and certainly Year 6 appear to have settled well, become used to the routines of the school, and are now familiar with their September timetables. Please note there are likely to be some adjustments to sets over the summer, now that the KS2 SATS results and our own baseline assessments have been completed. We have also greatly appreciated the support of Year 6 teachers and TAs from our partner primary schools. They have been dropping in over the last three weeks to facilitate the settling in, whilst saying hello to former pupils amongst the rest of the student body. Year 6 parents are reminded that there are helpful details on the Transition page of our website here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/transition>

### **Online eSafety**

With the summer break now on us, no doubt students will be spending a little more time on the internet and social media. It is appropriate, particularly given recent news stories, to remind parents that there are a number of risks to young people when going online. We will be running a number of information evenings for parents in the new term on this issue, but in the meantime I'd like to draw parents' attention to our website page: [www.bydales.outwood.com/safety](http://www.bydales.outwood.com/safety)

### **Library and Accelerated Reader**

We have been working on bringing the Library up to a standard that promotes a stronger culture of reading for pleasure within the academy. We have removed a large number of old reference books, and invested in £10,000 worth of new fiction books, particularly for those at younger reading ages. All the books have been catalogued against 'Accelerated Reader'. This is an online software package that aims to quiz students on completed books, and if passed, credits them with the number of words read. From September we will be in a position to properly sign-out books, and create league tables to encourage more reading for pleasure. We will have prizes too for students who become 'word millionaires' and so forth. To push students to achieve their potential in all subjects, we are determined to strengthen their ability to read at the required levels.

### **Year 7 Uniform Collection, Fitting Events and Bambini**

Just to remind new Year 7 parents that the free uniform will be available for collection from the academy on Wednesday 29 July from 10.00am-3.00pm. A letter has been sent previously and is available on our website. It would help if parents could, where possible, collect uniform at the suggested times, based on their child's surname. We are also running, for all year groups, two Trutex Uniform Events on Wednesday 29 July and Tuesday 18 August, both from 10.00am-3.00pm where additional items of uniform can be tried on for size, ordered, and delivered to your door. I am delighted to announce that from mid-August, Bambini of Guisborough will also begin to stock our official uniform.

### **Uniform (Miscellaneous)**

The appearance of all our students continues to be outstanding. Purely as a reminder, students are required to wear plain black shoes (without metal attachments) that can be polished, rather than boots or canvas/suede shoes. Socks must be plain black. Hair bands/bobbles must be plain black or purple. All students must have a suitable bag to carry books, at least A4 in size to accommodate folders. Blazer sleeves must be down, shirts tucked in and ties worn properly. Make-up is not allowed. It is rare that we need to reinforce these highest of expectations by issuing C4 detentions. Full details are on Pages 4-5 of the Planner. All students are expected to be in the full Outwood Academy Bydales uniform. Spare pairs of trousers, skirts, shirts etc should also be the correct Outwood ones. To order spare uniform you should register online with the code LEA00658SC and your email address at [www.trutexdirect.com](http://www.trutexdirect.com). For more details please visit our website: [www.bydales.outwood.com/uniform](http://www.bydales.outwood.com/uniform)

### **After School Enrichment**

We continue to run a huge number of after-school 'Enrichment' activities due to the willingness of staff to volunteer, something for which I am personally very grateful. There are over 50 such extra-curricular opportunities and we encourage all students to try something new and hopefully find an undiscovered talent. Regular attendance at an after-school activity also counts as one of the 10 'Pledges' to achieve before leaving in Year 11. Last week all students received the programme of Enrichments that will take place in the first half-term in September. A copy can always be found here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/enrichment-activities>

### **Basketball Opportunity**

I am pleased to announce that from Monday 7 September, Tees Valley Mohawks, a national league basketball team, will be running a satellite group open to students aged 13+, including those who do not normally attend this school, from 4.00-5.00pm on Mondays. This follows the already established basketball Enrichment session from 2.30-4.00pm. At the later session it is planned to also run a regional competition so that the best players from each of the satellite clubs will represent Middlesbrough in the north-east events and possibly even national events!

### **Drama Production – Little Shop of Horrors**

I can confirm that we intend to have a whole school production next year, and that it will be 'Little Shop of Horrors'. More details will follow, but I thought I would give advance notice to students who are interested in a part. The auditions will be run in the first couple of weeks of school. We are also planning to have a Year 7 Drama festival later in the year.

### **Year 8 Graduation and Residential**

Thank you to all carers, parents, grandparents and siblings who attending the two Year 8 Graduation ceremonies at the end of June, and supported us by allowing students to attend the subsidised three day residential at Carlton Lodge. These were the first such occasions of their type at the academy, and are an important reward to students who demonstrate, through their efforts and behaviour, that they are ready to being their GCSE subjects in Year 9. It was fantastic too that siblings, younger students and staff from some of our partner primary schools were also able to attend. Virtually the whole year group graduated up to Year 9, and photographs of the occasion can be purchased online following the links in the 'News' archive section of our website: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/blog/news>

### **Maths Challenge and Student Achievements**

Congratulations are also in order to our team of elite mathematicians from Year 9 who attended a mathematics competition between all of our 13 academies at Outwood Academy Adwick in Doncaster. They won! We aim to put on such opportunities throughout the year for students, and there is a similar opportunity in October for our athletes to compete at the English Institute of Sport Stadium in Sheffield, in the Outwood Family Games. I continue to be humbled by the extra-curricular and sporting talents of our students, and would encourage parents and students to share achievements that occur outside of school with me personally. Students inspire students, and the more we can celebrate the success of each other, the stronger and stronger our school community becomes.

### **The Bridge and Switch Youth Provision**

We are expanding the provision in school for our most vulnerable students and those who need more specialised additional support to achieve. We have recently promoted Miss Gates to become our new Inclusion Manager, and Mrs Jerchel to support her as the new Bridge Manager. We have also made two teaching assistant appointments, alongside establishing the work of personal 1:1 tutors for students in English, maths and science this year. Such a structure has worked well in our other academies. The recent 'good with outstanding' Ofsted report at Outwood Academy Acklam in Middlesbrough, stated "*Academy staff provide excellent support to students who need extra personal support. The 'Bridge' provides a very calm and welcoming area, where these students can complete their work and have access to specialist help if they need it.*" and "*Disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive very well-targeted support from teachers and teaching assistants to enable them to make good progress.*" Such work requires a suitable, dedicated base. As a result, as you may be aware, in May we requested to end the previous agreement to provide a room for the Youth Worker Team to operate from. We have liaised with local links to try to find a more suitable venue for the Youth Workers, possibly one that can operate during the school holidays too, unlike at present. We have also offered to provide a space during the school day for colleagues to complete 'outreach' work with vulnerable students if they wish. We will continue to support with access to our sports hall on an evening during term time if the team want that to continue. If you have any contacts for providing a suitable room within Marske itself, please could you pass them onto Aggie Scott, Early Help Manager Youth Service, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, c/o Skelton Youth & Community Centre, Marske Lane, Skelton, TS12 2HA

### **Road Safety and Parent Parking**

The roadworks at the roundabout in Marske have unfortunately highlighted again a number of concerns about child pedestrian safety, many of which I have mentioned in previous newsletters. I have also received some correspondence from parents, rightly worried as I am, about potential accidents. From September it will no longer be possible for parents to take their cars around the 'turning curve' towards Reception, at the

start and end of the school day, except in exceptional circumstances. This will apply to taxis also. This is due to the speed and awareness of some drivers going over the zebra crossing outside Reception, the routine unauthorised parking in the disabled bays and unsafe parking within the turning circle, which obscures vision of students and staff at the zebra crossing, as well as approaching drivers. I would urge all parent and carer drivers to accept the need for this, and to offer their cooperation freely. Cars should now park carefully down the straight section of the carpark, towards the sports hall and field. There are always enough spaces, but this will require the usual care and attention as students cross to access cars parked on the boundary fence side. I would also remind parents (and staff) that Churchill Drive is an 'access only' road to residents who live there, or on adjoining streets. The volume of traffic using this road as a short cut is unacceptable, and leads to danger as students walking along the road try to cross safely, particularly where parents park on the road or kerb to drop off/collect students. Use of the road in this way is a traffic offence. I continue to work with the council on alternatives, and you will recall we have now commissioned a Stagecarriage service that leaves New Marske each morning at 7.55am to further ease traffic issues.

### **Homework, Punctuality and Standards**

On Monday 7 September at 5.30pm there will be a short homework presentation to parents on the new homework policy. This will be alongside assemblies for students, to ensure everyone understands what is expected. From Monday 14 September, the school will phase in C4 detentions for missed homework, alongside teachers continuing to flag up concerns via Praising Stars© reports.

I am pleased that all the clocks within school will be replaced over the summer holidays, such that they, and the bells, will be synchronised from September. This will ensure that students can be even more prompt at lesson changeover, and staff can release students on time too, to ensure valuable learning time is not wasted. Where the occasional student arrives to a lesson late, after the rest of the group and without good reason, a C4 will be issued by the class teacher and served via a department detention. I do not anticipate this being a particular issue, as it is rare for students to be late to lessons (or indeed to school), but it has taken longer than usual to implement this approach due to the clocks not being fit for purpose. I informed students of this issue in assemblies during the last week of term.

### **Admissions Open Evening for Year 6**

For parents and carers who have children who will be in Year 6 next year, our Open Evening as part of the admissions process is on Thursday 17 September 6.00pm – 8.00pm. We also welcome parents (and students by agreement with their primary school) to visit the academy during the same Thursday at the following times 9.30-11.00 and 1.00-2.30.

### **Student Planners**

All students, including the new Year 7 on Transition last week, have received their 2015-2016 planners. Students have also been following their new timetables for some three weeks, and these are secured in the back of planners. Can I take the opportunity to remind parents that in order to support us with regard to homework completion etc, and also for communication with VMG tutors, that planners should be signed by parents each week? Your support with this is greatly appreciated, and there is a good deal of information in planners about the various policies and procedures here in the academy. Students are expected to look after their planners as they would an exercise book, and any that become damaged, lost or have graffiti will need to be replaced via Reception at a cost of £5.

### **Praising Stars© 6**

The sixth and final Praising Stars reports, known as PS6, were issued via students on Wednesday 15 July. Where students were absent these will have been posted home. There was also a cover letter explaining the codes on the report. Such reports, which aim to give a simple summary of the progress and effort your child is making, are issued six times a year, towards the end of each half-term. We respectfully ask for a prompt return of the reply slips so we can then check all reports have made it home. The reports also indicate any homework or coursework concerns, and whether there is a Parents' Evening request to see you, in each subject. A copy of the PS6 cover letter can be found here: [www.bydales.outwood.com/letters-to-parents](http://www.bydales.outwood.com/letters-to-parents)

### **Key Staff Contacts**

A list of the names and email of all teachers, learning managers and line managers can be found on our website here: [www.bydales.outwood.com/contact](http://www.bydales.outwood.com/contact) This followed suggestions from parents and governors on further improving lines of communication.

### **Parental Emailing List**

Following a 'Parent Voice Forum' earlier in the year, a reminder that we have created a parental emailing list. It is largely used to inform parents when letters have gone home via students, and for important reminders and/or information. If you would like to subscribe to our parent emailing list (or unsubscribe) please select 'Parent Email Sign-up' after clicking on 'Links' at the top of our website [www.bydales.outwood.com](http://www.bydales.outwood.com)

### **Outwood Academy Bydales Social Media**

Whilst the parental email list will be used occasionally, we do not want to fill email inboxes. If you would like to have more frequent updates about what is going on in school day-by-day, you could follow the school on Twitter using @OutwoodBydales or 'like' our Facebook page called 'Outwood Academy Bydales'. We will of course continue to send letters home too. Our website home page [www.bydales.outwood.com](http://www.bydales.outwood.com) has direct links to Tweets if you don't use Twitter yourself.

Finally, I wish you and your family well for the summer, and look forward to working again with you in September.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Wappat', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Wappat  
Principal