



Astrea Academy Woodfields  
Weston Road, Balby  
Doncaster, DN4 8ND  
Tel: 01302 312140

Principal: Jo Cater

8<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Firstly, I would like to warmly welcome those of you who are new to our academy, either because your child has recently started with us at Astrea Academy Woodfields, or because your Y6 child has been offered a place with us for the new academic year. Your child is joining us at an exciting time!

For parents, often more so than for children, the move to secondary school is a daunting time, especially if it is not the first-choice school you had chosen for your child. Please be reassured that we understand your apprehensions and that our transition team is now visiting every primary school to meet with your child and their teachers, so that we can understand and cater for their needs moving forward. In addition, we will also be offering parents who didn't attend our previous open evening, the opportunity to visit the academy during the day and see for yourselves our students and staff, working and learning together. The date of the open morning is yet to be confirmed, but please contact the academy reception and leave your details if you are a Y6 parent/carer wishing to visit the academy.

For those parents who I have met previously, you will know that I will always be honest in my assessment of the academy's development and what the priorities are for improvement. There is still a long way to go, to becoming a 'good' academy, but as many of you will testify, your children are happier here now than they have been in a long time and that the quality of teaching, learning and wider experiences has already improved.

I appreciate the support that you as parents are giving to your children, to myself and our staff, as we make the changes necessary to secure a brighter future for them. Parental feedback is important to us and it has been gratifying to see an increase in attendance at parents' evenings, parental workshops and at the senior leader drop-in sessions. There is a direct correlation between a child's success and parental engagement with an academy.

I appreciate that one of the pressing concerns for parents currently is what the academy's uniform will be and when the new uniform will be launched. I had hoped by this stage to be able to share with certainty the details of this, however we are experiencing issues with trying to source a manufacturer that can meet both our demands for quality and affordability. What I can say is that the new uniform will be required from September and will consist of grey trousers / skirt, white shirt with collar, optional burgundy V neck knitted jumper (with academy logo), academy tie, academy blazer with logo. The trousers, skirt and shirts will be able to be purchased by parents at any retailer enabling the costs to be kept to

a minimum. As soon as I have further information regarding the tie, jumper and blazer, I will share this with parents.

For transparency purposes I asked for an independent review to be carried out across the academy at the end of January by Challenge Partners. The review was carried out in the same way an Ofsted inspection would be conducted, with the lead reviewer being a current HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector). 5 reviewers spent 3 days in the academy observing lessons in all subjects and year groups. They spoke to students, looked at their work and assessment data, as well as having challenging conversations with ourselves as leaders about what steps we are taking to improve the academy. I am pleased with the report as nothing within it, including the 'even better if' recommendations, were unknown. We know our academy well and have actions in progress to address everything that needs improving.

There is, as I have previously stated, a large legacy of underachievement and poor leadership from the previous school/Trust, but our actions are addressing this rapidly because every single day is important to your child. Please read the attached report which I hope gives you the confidence that we are moving swiftly in the right direction for the benefit of your child.

Kind regards  
Joanne Cater  
Principal

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