



Friday 17th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the first fortnightly parent update of the new school year. It has been wonderful to welcome our students back to school full of hope for a more stable year ahead. Please note the new layout of the parent update: I have introduced a quick read for busy parents, as well as still including the extra information arranged under subheadings for those who want to know more. Do let us know if you find it useful.

Quick Read

- Our student leaders have taken part in leadership training since returning to school. They have also set their priorities for the year ahead: charity fundraising; supporting businesses; achieving an anti-bullying award; and building a new 'Place for Peace' for remembrance in school.
- A Y11 intervention programme is in place for this half term which involves targeted students taking part in tutor time, lunch time, after school, and virtual revision sessions.
- Students have made a great start back in school and we held a prize draw this week for students who had over 96% attendance last year.
- Our extra-curricular brochure launches next week with lots of clubs for students to participate in outside of lessons.
- We're launching an Afghanistan refugee clothing appeal, see below for how you can donate.
- Vaccinations for 12-15 year olds will start nationally from next week. This is a public health initiative run by healthcare professionals. The school will merely provide a venue and some admin support, and is not involved in any other way. Consent is between you, your child and the immunisation team.
- We still have a pile of exam certificates from previous years for GCSE and A-Level, which can be collected by contacting exams@stokesleyschool.org.
- When visiting school, please remember we have a new reception which is up the steps to the left of where you used to enter.
- When taking your child in Y7-Y11 out of school for appointments, please remember to arrive in good time for us to locate them and bring them down to reception.
- We have nearly 100 students who have joined us in Y12 this year - a record amount for some time!
- The perils of the construction industry at the moment mean our sixth form block is not quite complete, but it is shaping up to be a great new space for our older students.
- There's a message from our CEO and dates for your diary at the end of this letter.





Longer Read

Student Leadership

Mrs Darbyshire, Deputy Headteacher, and 67 of our student leaders were thrilled to welcome guest speakers from the Yorkshire Leadership Academy last Friday. Students participated in a range of activities exploring what and who makes a great leader. Students also worked on developing their own leadership skills. The group finished the day with a planning session to decide on our priorities for this academic year and decided on four focus areas: charity fundraising through sport and creative events; developing community work through supporting local businesses who may have suffered during lockdown and developing links particularly through our Eco-Group with the support of Miss White; achieving the Diana Award through our anti-bullying ambassador group with the support of Mrs Brosnan; and creating and building the new location for our Place for Peace. Our Head Girl, Head Boy and Deputy Head Girl were present throughout the day supporting and encouraging our younger student leaders. It was a fabulous experience for students in Y7-13 to be able to work together to generate ideas to make our school and college a place which values our student voice. Students were asked to give feedback at the end of the day and we think Sam, in Y9, captured the atmosphere of the day with his comment: *'I have found today truly inspiring, I just want to get out there and make a difference now and in the future.'*



Year 11 Intervention

Following the summer assessments and an overview of your child's performance throughout the last academic year, students have been selected to attend our intervention programme to boost their skills in specific areas and subjects. If your child has been selected, you will receive notification from the department. Different sessions run during tutor time, lunchtime, straight after school and virtually from 4-5pm. Not all students require intervention so please don't be concerned if your child has not been selected for this half term. If your child has been placed on the list for support in a subject, we appreciate your help in encouraging them



to attend every session. If you have any queries, please contact Mrs Darbyshire, Deputy Headteacher, on j.darbyshire@stokesleyschool.org or Mr Wilson, Head of Y11, on n.wilson@stokesleyschool.org and they will be able to assist you.

Attendance & Behaviour

It has been terrific to see the students back in school this week, the students are a credit to themselves, fully engaged in lessons and once again enjoying learning in specialist teaching rooms across our school site. Our Y7s and 8s have experienced moving around the school site for the first time.

This week our Head Boy and Girl have been joined by a group of Y7s (pictured below) to carry out a prize draw to reward 54 of the 561 students who had attendance at 96% or above last year. We are lucky enough to receive some fantastic support from local businesses who donate prizes for us to give to deserving students. If you are in a position to offer prizes for our positive behaviour and attendance draws, please contact us through office@stokesleyschool.org.



LIFE updates: clubs and a whole-school appeal

We have a couple of exciting updates for you from Mrs Fox and the LIFE curriculum following the introductory letter sent home to you last week.

Next week, you will be receiving our extra-curricular brochure. We're both proud and excited to say that we're offering over 40 activities during lunchtimes and after school for students to sign up for this academic year. With a wide range of activities including zumba, bullet



journalling, chess, a green group, ukulele group, the school production, jewellery making, glee and debate club we're pretty sure there will be something for everyone!

As a school community, we feel it is important that we do our bit towards the national call to support the refugees arriving in our country from Afghanistan, many of whom are arriving in Britain with nothing more than the clothes that they are wearing.

Students will have a LIFE lesson over the next couple of weeks about recent events in Afghanistan, and will have the opportunity to discuss who these refugees are and why they are coming to the UK. We are asking our students and you, their families, to support us in collecting as many items of clothing as possible so that, as a community, we can make a substantial contribution to easing what must clearly be a hugely traumatic experience for all involved. Even if each student brings in one item of clothing, we would be donating approximately 1200 items to charity.

Students can bring donations directly into school themselves or, should you rather, they can be dropped off by you at reception where there is also a collection box.

With the focus of our year being on positivity and opportunity, we felt that this really was something great for our students to be involved with, a sentiment we're sure you'll echo.

Vaccination for 12-15 year olds

As you will be aware, the government has announced a vaccination programme for healthy 12-15 year olds. Although the school premises are likely to be used for this, beyond that it has nothing to do with the school. Any discussions about consent are between you and your child, and the school will merely be a host to the programme; not an advocate or otherwise. Please see below the information we have received so far from the government on this matter:

Young people aged 12 to 15 to be offered a COVID-19 vaccine

The Health and Social Care Secretary has announced that young people aged 12 to 15 in England will be offered one dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, following advice from the four UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs).

The main purpose of the COVID-19 childhood vaccination programme is to provide protection to the children who receive the vaccine and help to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in the wider population.





Healthy school-aged children aged 12 to 15 will primarily receive their COVID-19 vaccination in their school (with alternative provision for those who are home schooled), in secure services or specialist mental health settings.

Like all school-based vaccination programmes, the vaccine will be administered by healthcare staff with appropriate qualifications who are trained in the vaccination of children and young people.

More information on the COVID-19 vaccine, the vaccination programme and how it will work, as well as answers to some frequently asked questions, will be included in the guidance for schools from Public Health England to be published shortly.

Exam Certificates

We haven't yet received exam certificates for the 20/21 cohort but we are still holding on to lots for previous years. Certificates can be collected by the student, or the student can authorise a parent/carer to collect on their behalf. The parent/carer would need a letter of authorisation and some photo ID. Please contact exams@stokesleyschool.org and we can check if we have a certificate, and can arrange for the certificate to be available for collection at reception.

Visiting school and appointments during the school daychild

Please can we remind all parents/carers that we have a new reception area/entrance at the front of the school building and this should be used for school access at all times.

Can we also take this opportunity to ask that, if you need to collect your child from school throughout the day for appointments, you arrive early to allow school staff the time to have your child sent down to reception in time for you. It also helps the teacher if you can write the appointment on the appropriate day in your child's planner if they are in Y7-Y11.

Sixth Form

We've welcomed just shy of 100 new Y12 students to our sixth form this term, our largest cohort for a number of years. The majority of students returning to us are from last year's Y11, but one or two new faces have joined too which is great to see.

The sixth form have enjoyed the move back into their refurbished building since we returned in September. Whilst not quite finished in places, the new layout is proving to be a much better space for students to study. Improved WiFi has meant that our network can cope with more devices attached, so we'd like to encourage college students to bring in a device from home if it would help with their studies. We do also have some chromebooks available for the sixth form students to borrow in school. Our bistro reopened on Wednesday this week too and we hope our students are enjoying the selection of food and drink on offer





throughout the day. Just a few more windows and some finishing touches, and we'll be there: the joys of the construction industry at the moment!

A message at the start of term from Richard Crane, CEO of the Areté Learning Trust

A warm welcome back to all of our pupils across the trust, and I hope you have had a great summer with family and friends. I know that staff across our three schools are working really hard to ensure that we get the new academic year off to the best possible start, and I would urge you to make the most of all of the educational opportunities that are on offer in our schools, and make the most of your potential in every way. Have a really good Autumn term and be the best that you can be!

Dates for your diary

- Y6 Open Evening takes place on Thursday 7th October - times to follow.
- School finishes slightly earlier on Thursday 7th October at 2.20pm to allow for the set up of Open Evening - transport companies have been informed.
- Friday 8th October is a PD day and students will not be in school.
- Sixth Form Open Evening takes place on Tuesday 12th October - times to follow.
- We are planning an opportunity for our Y7 parents to visit school this half term having missed out on Open Evening last year - keep your eyes peeled for more information!

Yours faithfully,

Mrs H. L. Millett,
Headteacher

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