

17 December 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the end of the term, I am writing to update you on some of the exciting developments and improvements that have taken place at UAK.

Back in July, I wrote to you stating that our expectations were for all stakeholders to raise the bar in terms of their attitude to learning, their behaviour for learning, engagement and their attendance. I am delighted to inform you that our internal quality assurance process has highlighted significant improvements in young people's attitude to learning and behaviour for learning. We have made tremendous progress in these areas and I have no doubt that these will lead to improved outcomes for our students.

We have also received significant external feedback from partner organisations and training providers supporting the judgements that our quality assurance process highlighted. This has been further supported by the results of our parental, student and staff surveys.

During the year I have met with a number of parents and carers who have given positive insights into our current performance and how we can continue to improve as an academy. I would like to take this opportunity to invite any parents or carers who believe they can positively contribute to the further development of the academy to join a Parental Focus Group. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact the Office either in person, by telephone or office@uak.email

There have been so many events and activities taking place this term that have contributed to the development of the academy. I take this opportunity to highlight some of the key events that showcase what we are achieving at the academy.

Bradford Literature Festival

This saw the author Sophie Powrie speak to Year 7 and 8 students about her life as a teenage author and highlighted that anybody could achieve what she has achieved.

Cultural Day

As part of our curriculum offer, we have set a focus on developing the cultural capital of our young people. We believe that young people need to broaden their horizons outside of the school setting. As part of our cultural capital day we took 350 students to Leeds Town Hall to a screening of a world renowned cultural children's film. This was followed by a visit to Leeds Art Gallery to appreciate the artwork on display and to raise the aspiration levels of our students focusing on the creative arts.

Getting On Together Days

The Personal Development days focus on how we get along together, how we develop relationships, how we deal with conflict and how we make a bigger contribution to our local, regional and national communities.

Safety Days

Students were involved in a number of different events and assemblies focusing on staying safe which included road safety, staying safe online and staying safe around fireworks.

Year 11 Pre-Public Examinations

The Year 11 PPE's were held at the end of November. Year 11 engagement and behaviour during the examination period was fantastic and showed their increased levels of maturity and focus to their public exams. Teaching staff will be conducting a detailed question level analysis of the papers to identify key areas of study for each individual. This will enable bespoke targeted interventions to be delivered to enhance pupil outcomes.

Next Steps to School Improvement

Curriculum Offer

As we continue to develop the curriculum offer that the academy offers to all young people, we will be launching the I-Collect programme. The programme will focus on the key social and cultural experiences that all young people are entitled to in order to make them effective citizens. The programme has been designed with support from young people, community leaders and in collaboration with our partner schools.

This includes cultural visits, the opportunity to engage in community and charity work, promoting British values, working with local schools, leadership opportunities, First aid and Mental Health programmes and healthy lifestyles. The programme will be available to all students with a particular focus on Years 7, 8 and 9.

Attendance

Can I remind parents and carers that all students must arrive at school by 8.25am, ready to start learning at 8.30am (Lesson 1). They must be on time for all lessons. Any student who arrives after the morning bell or the lesson register has been taken will receive a detention. All students must aim for an attendance score of 97%; any score under this will negatively impact of them reaching their true potential. Can I please remind parents not to take students out on holidays during term time as this significantly impacts on their learning.

Staffing

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of the appointment of a new Assistant Principal, Mrs Petrik-Davies, who will be starting with us after Christmas and will be focusing on student development and behaviour. Mrs Petrik-Davies will be working closely with Ms Feiweles to ensure that we continue to develop our student's engagement in learning and that this is consistently applied across the Trust.

Finally, I would to take this opportunity to thank the amazing students and staff at the academy for their outstanding effort and attitude this term. We have set the bar high in achieving rapid school improvement and we are well on our way to ensuring better, consistent outcomes for young people.

May I wish you all a very festive Christmas and we will see you all in the New Year.

Yours faithfully

Jon Skurr
Head of School