



THORNS

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

T 01384 816225

E info@thorns-s.dudley.sch.uk W www.thorns-s.dudley.sch.uk



May 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I complete my first half term as Associate Principal at Thorns Community College, I would like to say how much I have enjoyed my first five weeks. I have been given a warm and friendly reception by all I have spoken to and I have met with many students who have a positive attitude towards both school life and learning. I have also had the opportunity to observe several lessons where I have seen students with a wonderful work ethic and high aspirations. However, I have noted a number of aspects that still need development and improvement over the coming months some of which are detailed further in this letter.

Attendance and Punctuality

It is paramount that students are prompt to morning registration and to their lessons during the school day. I have observed a number of students coming through the gates after 8:45am in the morning. My expectation is that all students are on site for 8:40am and ready to start the day in their form at 8:45am.

Uniform

Over the coming weeks, we will be reinforcing our expectations around uniform and behaviour with students in assemblies. I would like to outline these expectations so that you can best support your son or daughter in meeting them.

Our uniform expectations are:

- Black shoes - NO coloured logos/coloured stripes/coloured laces/trainers (From September 2017 - no canvas pumps or black trainers). We will provide further guidance after half term
- A black blazer with the school badge
- Smart plain black trousers or school skirt – No jeans or jeggings
- Plain white shirt, tucked in with the top button done up
- Tie with 'T' logo showing below the knot
- Plain coloured coat - no denim/leather/tracksuit tops/hoodies/sweatshirts
- Optional plain black v-neck jumper with sleeves – not a substitute for a blazer
- Plain black or natural tights or black socks

Other uniform requirements:

- There should be NO shaved patterns in hair or hair length shaved shorter than grade one.
- There should be no obvious two-tone or unusual/extreme hair colourings (e.g. pink, blue, red, purple etc.)
- Only ONE ring and ONE pair of small stud earrings may be worn (one in each ear)
- Hijabs, if worn, must be plain black
- Make up, if worn, must be DISCRETE
- No wide/fashion belts

Equipment for Learning

Students should also come to school prepared for the day and have the necessary equipment for lessons with them. This will include a pen, pencil, ruler, rubber and all books needed for lessons.

Mobile Phones and Devices

Parents should also be aware that any digital media (mobile phones, mp3 players, ipods) should not be brought into school. They can cause conflict between staff and students and often cause lessons to be disrupted. Any digital media on display, including earphones, will be confiscated by staff and will have to be collected by students at the end of the day. If a student persists in using a mobile device without express permission, we will confiscate it and we will require parents to come into school to collect it.

In the interests of flexibility and in keeping with technological use, there may be times when a teacher allows a student to use the internet or calculator facility for educational purposes in lessons, but this is purely at the discretion of the class teacher. It is not an expectation of the school that students should have such devices as part of their equipment. Students who fail to meet these expectations or disrupt the learning of others will be placed in isolation and parental meetings will be held to discuss possible ways forward.

The expectations of the school regarding uniform, digital media and behaviour are aimed at supporting students and removing points of conflict that have proved to be a barrier to achievement in lessons. At Thorns, we want all students to achieve their full potential and we believe that these traditional standards are important in achieving this. I also believe that these high expectations will support students in gaining employment and in moving on to further education.

Behaviour Management Services (BMS)

Over the past six weeks, we have renovated a section of the school and converted it into a new facility called Behaviour Management Services (BMS). From the 19th June 2017, the current pastoral structure will change. Behaviour will be monitored and sanctions put in place by the following staff:

- Miss Lewis – Assistant Principal (Behaviour and Safeguarding)
- Mrs Fullwood – Inclusion Manager
- Mrs Timmis – Senior Behaviour Worker
- Mrs Bradley - Behaviour Worker (current Year 7 and next year's Year 7)
- Miss Smith – Behaviour worker (current Year 8)
- Mrs Darcy – Behaviour Worker (current Year 9)
- Mr Lewis – Behaviour Worker (current Year 10)

Teaching Heads of Year will continue to lead each year group. Please remember your child's Form Teacher should be the first point of contact if you have any pastoral concerns. If you have any subject related questions then the class teacher or the relevant Head of Department should be contacted.



Events and Forthcoming Dates:

- The Thorns' Annual Ski Trip to Austria took place in February, all students (and staff!) returned having gained new skills and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.
- In April we were amazed by Thorns' Annual Dance Production - "Impulse". Our talented dancers produced some stunning performances and the work behind the scenes that goes into creating an event such as this must also be commended.
- Year 10 recently completed mock exams and conducted themselves very well.
- Students have organised and held a variety of fundraising events over the term - we have raised money for Comic Relief, WaterAid, Cancer Research to name but a few.
- Some of our girls attended an FA Youth Sport Trust Pilot programme, held at St George's Park, the training ground of the England football teams. This is aimed at improving the confidence of girls and encouraging them to take up football.
- On Friday 19th May, our Year 9 Boys football team produced some excellent performances in the Mander Centre Football Competition. Hosted at the home of Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club they played against eight other local school on the famous Molineux pitch. Both our A and B teams narrowly missed out on the final but two members of our squad were recognised as Players of the Tournament. This was a fantastic opportunity for them following a very successful season and cup campaign and the boys were commended for the way that they represented Thorns.
- GCSE exam season is in full swing for Year 11; students are continuing to work hard and we are confident their efforts will be rewarded by great results in August.
- On Thursday 22nd June between 5:00 and 7:30pm, our PTFA will be hosting our Summer Festival.
- Year 11 will be celebrating the end of their five years at Thorns at their PROM on Thursday 29th June.
- In July we will be welcoming our new Year 7s to Thorns for their Induction days on Tuesday 4th and Thursday 6th July. There will also be an Induction meeting on Thursday 6th July starting at 6:30pm.
- In the final week of term some of our students will be undertaking work experience, some will be taking in the sights of Paris while others will be taking part in our annual sports day.

I hope that you will discuss the issues raised in this letter with your family and support the school during this transitional period. Our staff and students are very excited about what the future holds at Thorns Community College and I personally look forward to the coming months where we continue our journey to becoming a world class school that puts Brierley Hill on the map for providing a first class education to its young people. We regard it as a real privilege to serve this community and each successful year will prove just how much your school has to offer the education of any child in this area and from further afield. We look forward to working collaboratively with you during the coming years to secure the best possible achievements for your child.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Manny Kelay
Associate Principal