



8th September 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been lovely to see our students returning to school this week. They have looked smart, engaged very well in lessons as usual and welcomed the new 'Preparation for Excellence' sessions with real maturity.

It has also been a real pleasure to speak with our existing students about the record successes of our previous Year 11 cohort. As remarks and appeals are coming in, the record results are rising even higher and the results are now breaking all previous results in the school's recent history and, in some cases, as far back as we can find data for.

I wanted to write to all parents/carers with a summary of a number of pieces of information from the start of term. As always, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Aspire Lead in the first instance. I am of course, also happy to be contacted at school; my new email address is guy.swallow@whitstoneschool.org.

Uniform

Thank you to the overwhelming majority of students who have attended school in line with the school uniform policy, which was shared on a number of occasions prior to the summer break. The students look smart and a number have utilised the second hand uniform supply we have in school.

Please could I ask the very small minority of students who have an issue with uniform to ensure that this is rectified by Monday. In most of these cases, the incorrect uniform item is far more expensive than the correct item and is both a costly and time-consuming issue for everyone concerned.

New School Fence

If you have visited our school site recently, you will have seen the construction of a new perimeter fence around our site. As you are aware, we have a considerable number of measures in place to keep students and staff safe during the day however, the building of this perimeter fence and electronic gates at points around school, will ensure that students and staff are even safer. The fence should be finished by the Christmas break and will still allow for visitors, who will need to use the gates close to the front of school and which will be connected by video and voice link to the school Reception.

Punctuality

Please could I take this opportunity to remind students that school continues to start at 8.40am, with a warning bell sounding at 8.38am. As outlined above, in the coming weeks, our school gates will close at 8.40am and students will need to alert the school Reception if they are late. Students who are continually late will be expected to remain in school for a late detention on Thursday for the number of minutes they have been late during the course of the preceding week.

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Equipment

During the first week back in school, we have emphasised to students the importance of arriving to school with the correct basic equipment. This saves on learning time at the start of lessons, when teachers may be required to supply students with equipment they have forgotten to bring to school and also ensures that students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning.

Dietary Requirements

We are aware of a number of students in school who have either allergies or dietary requirements. These requirements can easily be accommodated within our school canteen and also Catering lessons in both Key Stage 3 and 4. We are however, also aware that a number of students have told us of their dietary requirements yet we do not have confirmation from parents/carers at home. As such, please (if you have not already done so) contact school to confirm your child's dietary requirements. Should you have any questions regarding this, please contact either Mrs Evans or Mrs Eaton at school and they will be happy to help.

Email Migration

In line with all other Somerset schools, our email addresses are in the process of changing and have done so fully by the end of tomorrow; our email addresses will now end with @whitstoneschool.org. The best method for contacting staff remains by phone or through Epraise.

Year 7 Aspire Lead Parents' Evening

In addition to the letter sent by Mrs Turner recently, please could I remind the parents/carers of Year 7 students that there will be an initial parents' evening on Thursday 22nd September from 15:15 to 16:45, whereby Year 7 students can attend school with their parents/carers, meet their Aspire Lead informally to check on how they have settled in and also tour parents/carers around school to show them how their usual day looks in school. Further details regarding the evening can be found on the letter from Mrs Turner.

I very much look forward to seeing many of you over the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely



Guy Swallow

Headteacher