



16 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been a real pleasure to spend time during my first week in post visiting lessons and seeing our students at work. I have thoroughly enjoyed delivering assemblies to all of our year groups and meeting many individual students during each school day. I am looking forward to continuing to listen to our students over the coming days and weeks.

High Standards – Behaviour for Learning

During assemblies this week, I spoke to each year group about my desire to challenge them to meet the very highest standards in school. This is especially true with regards to their behaviour for learning in lessons. As I am sure you appreciate, excellent learning behaviour during lessons enables students to access the teaching they receive and to maximise every opportunity they have to make progress in their academic work. As such, our staff have worked this week to clarify our expectations of students in lessons. We have called these our 'Learning Standards', of which there are five. Many of our students have requested this clarification of expectations when I have spoken with them during the week. The 'Learning Standards' are clear, concise and will enable all of our students to learn in disruption free classrooms. I strongly believe that this will enable our students to succeed in their learning. This clarification of our expectations for behaviour for learning can be found on our school website by accessing the following link <http://www.whitstoneschool.org/for-parents/policies/>.

Our students have been introduced to these changes during this week and have had lots of opportunity to practice using them. They have also had an assembly outlining the new standards. The changes will come into full effect from Monday 20th January. We will trial these changes through until February half-term and regularly consult with staff, students and parents regarding their impact. These minor changes will form part of a bigger consultation regarding the behaviour for learning policy over the next term. We will ensure that parents are fully involved in this consultation. However, if you would like to share your views over the coming weeks, please do contact Ruth Sayer at rsayer@educ.somerset.gov.uk and book an appointment to meet with me as part of the two 'coffee mornings' I have scheduled to meet with parents. If these times are not convenient please do contact us to arrange a suitable appointment.

I would welcome your support in reiterating to your son or daughter the importance of excellent behaviour for learning at school and the impact that this has on the learning of all students and the safety of each individual.

High Standards - Uniform

A number of students have asked me for clarification regarding the uniform expectations during this week. I have had many positive and thought provoking conversations with them. I fully appreciate the cost of purchasing uniform and the impact any changes have on families. As such, any review of the uniform policy will involve parents and any changes would take effect from September to avoid any changes to uniform during the academic year.

I would, however, like to draw your attention to the existing uniform policy, which states that there should be no leggings, jeans or hoodies worn whilst on the school site. Our current policy also states that there should be no facial piercings. From Monday 27th January, all students will be expected to fully abide by the uniform policy. Any student who is not in the correct uniform will be asked to change into the correct uniform.

I would like to thank you in anticipation of your continued support in maintaining the high standards we expect of our students.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy Swallow', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr Guy Swallow
Headteacher