

Wellfield High School

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Mrs L A Gwinnett, Executive Head
Mr J Lewis, Head of School



7th January 2020

Dear Parents,

Spring Term Updates and Reminders

I would like to start by saying Happy New Year and that I hope you have all had a good break. We often start the new year by making resolutions and, in doing so, we reflect on the previous year and decide upon our priorities for the coming year. The start of a new year and a new term, along with taking up the role of Head of School, has given me the opportunity to complete even more reflection than ever from a school point of view and, working with the staff during INSET day on Monday 6th January, we have identified our priorities for the weeks and months ahead. Many of these have been outlined to our students during a whole school assembly this morning but I also feel it is important to ensure parents are aware of our ongoing work so you can continue to support where appropriate.

Staffing updates

As I now move into the Head of School role, I am pleased to say that Miss O'Neill will now become Assistant Headteacher for Progress and Intervention. Miss O'Neill, who will continue to be Campbell's House Progress Leader, has worked closely with me over the past 18 months and I am sure her enthusiasm and dedication will see her do a fantastic job. It's also worth a reminder that Mrs Manley joined us before Christmas as a Pastoral and Behaviour Manager with a specific focus on careers advice and guidance. She will work closely with Miss O'Neill to ensure students receive the highest quality careers advice and guidance.

We also welcome Mrs Wiggins in Food Preparation and Nutrition, bringing with her bags of experience from the catering industry as well as in education. Another strong addition to our team is Mr Hardy, who has joined us full time teaching Spanish. His appointment was necessary due to Mrs Hunt's decision late in the Autumn to take up an opportunity in another school. We are delighted to have recruited such a strong replacement at such short notice. Finally, we are pleased to report that Mrs Ashurst will also be returning to teach on a part time basis within the Foundation Faculty.

Due to the internal role changes and appointments of staff, we have also made some tweaks to student timetables. As always, we have ensured that these have been clearly communicated with students during tutor time this morning.

In addition to the new staff already mentioned we also welcome Mr Dunne who will be working with us as an extra member of the Endeavour Learning Trust team here at Wellfield. Mr Dunne will be picking up a number of Executive Head duties from Mrs Gwinnett. This is due to the expansion of the Trust and the number of schools the Trust team are now working to support. As a school we are really looking forward to working with Mr Dunne as we continue to grow and thrive in all we do.

Behaviour and standards

We often start a term with reminders to students in tutor time about the rewards and sanctions policies and procedures. However, this term has started with a whole staff review of the policies and procedures during INSET day and a whole school assembly this morning. I firmly believe that it is vital for us to start the term with the highest standards and expectations of all students. Some of the reminders include the expectations about behaviour during unstructured time, engagement and attitudes in lessons and the systems for challenging/sanctioning students who are not meeting the expectations we have within school. I am keen to ensure that all students feel safe, challenged and supported at Wellfield and that unwanted behaviours do not detract their teachers from teaching and other students from learning. That being said, the behaviour and attitudes of the vast majority of our students are excellent and therefore these reminders are simply to reboot the tone for the term ahead for all students.

Punctual Arrival for school

One of our many roles as a school is to ensure our students are ready for life after Wellfield. We are all aware of the importance of being punctual and that most employers and Post-16 providers simply won't accept poor punctuality. Therefore, I would like to remind all parents and students that **there is an expectation that students arrive for school by 8.40am**. This is when the first school bell will go and students are expected to move to lessons, in full school uniform and ready to learn, by 8.45am. To ensure this is the case, as of Wednesday 8th January students will be expected to use the cycle path to arrive in the sports hall by 8.40am. Here, students will find numerous duty members of staff, including PDC staff, who will support where needed, monitor uniform standards and ensure students are ready to learn, moving them on to their classrooms. Registration will then take place promptly at the beginning of lesson. Where this is not the case, a late mark will be given which will lead to a break-time detention. If this happens regularly then the sanctions will obviously escalate.

It's also worth noting that we do offer a **breakfast club service from 8am-8.35am** and we welcome its use for all of our students, with a free breakfast for those in receipt of free school meals. The shutters in the canteen will be closed at 8.35am to ensure sufficient time is given to consume food and drink before the 8.40am bell, so students do need to be punctual if they are to use this service.

Regular Attendance

A good majority of our students attend well (95% plus) but for a significant minority there is much work to be done. We currently have strong, rigorous and robust systems for challenging instances of persistent absenteeism and this means that all absences will be vigorously pursued, so please don't be offended by this. If absence is unavoidable then it is essential that parents contact the school in person via phone by 8.40am on every day of your child's absence. This is actually vital for us from a safeguarding point of view. If your child is absent and we haven't heard from you then Miss Reed, our Attendance Officer will need to ring all the contact numbers until the whereabouts of your child can be established. Please also be aware, that if absences are repeated without medical evidence then home visits may also be carried out. The school's social media accounts should not be used to notify absence. Thank you to all those parents who already robustly support us in this. Your continued support in this area would be greatly appreciated.

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Re-brand/ Marketing

Another key focus for the term ahead is how we let people know about all the fantastic work that is going on in our school. We were particularly pleased by the turnout at the parent consultation regarding the possibility of re-branding the school. The overwhelming feeling was that parents and students are proud of our school, the improvements we have made and the future of Wellfield, as well as the history behind it. The passion, dedication and determination of the parents in attendance was overwhelming and served only to reinforce what a strong community we have. We have talked in recent months about how we can further improve Wellfield's reputation in the local community, hence the re-brand discussion.

However, the majority of parents felt that getting the message out about how all the amazing things about us as a school would be the best solution rather than a re-brand. Therefore, over the coming weeks and months, I will be looking to work with staff, students and parents to develop the school's marketing strategy to ensure that more people in the local area are aware of the brilliant work going on within the school.

I am extremely excited by the challenge I have been given at Wellfield and, by working together with staff, students and parents, the school can only go from strength to strength.

Should you wish to discuss anything further please do not hesitate to contact us via email (enquiries@whs.sch.lancs.uk) or give us a call.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Lewis

Head of School