

WH/RNM

25th October 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your support for us through our first half term as a part of the GORSE Academies Trust.

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION 2018 PERFORMANCE DATA

We were pleased to see that we were, in the all-important progress measure, the highest performing school at both GCSE and A Level in the area.

Families can be assured that this achievement does not make us complacent and that our drive for continuing improvement remains absolute; the 2018 results create a significant three year trend and we still expect to see further positive steps for our outcomes for 2019.

PREPARATION FOR THE GCSE EXAMS

Our trial examinations for Year 11 start on November 12th, so the half term holiday is well placed for students to close those last gaps. We will have a Year 11 subject consultation evening on Thursday 6th December. This is strategically placed so that we can agree on what work the student will need to complete during the Christmas holidays, ready for the next set of trial examinations in February 2019.

ELLIOTT HUDSON COLLEGE AT BOSTON SPA

We are accelerating our plans for this important development, with our Open Evening planned for Wednesday 28th November. We are working with senior colleagues within the trust on three fronts: the curriculum offer, the development of the buildings and the promotion of the venture. The bringing together of Boston Spa Academy and Elliott Hudson College will form a formidable Post-16 provision, about which we are very excited.

GCSE POD

Well done to all our students who have used GCSE POD to support their revision; our downloads have now reached 1,000! If you are unfamiliar with GCSE POD Mrs Westerman's letter introducing it is still on our [website](#), as is her [user guide](#). She is generously offering to pay for the 2019 Prom ticket for the student who makes best use of GCSE POD.

PARENT APP

This phone app, which dovetails into our management information system will increasingly replace text as a means by which we communicate with home so can I take this opportunity of reminding you of its availability. If you have not yet downloaded the app then the letter of introduction from Miss Jespers is still on our [website](#), as is her [user guide](#).

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PURPLE ZONE

A key element of our success in the 2018 examinations was our use of Purple Zone in all lessons. This is where the hardest part of the lesson can be found, and where work is done independently. Tomorrow's staff training day will be spent in refining our use of Purple Zone to make sure it is maximising performance for every individual child.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SPORT

We have enjoyed the start of the 2018/19 Gorse Games which began with the football tournament this week. Details of our progress over the next months will be in the blog.

We are pleased that as part of our work with the Trust we will be introducing three new sports to our curriculum, with national coaches joining us in rowing, volleyball and karate. These have been of particular interest for our families currently in Year 6.

On Look North this evening at 6.30pm you will be able to see students from the Ruth Gorse Academy talking about how the Gorse rowing programme has inspired them. If you are keen for your son or daughter to be involved they should approach Mr Potter.

We are also looking forward to the launch of an additional health initiative called 'Gorse Gets Healthy', which will be led by Mr Potter and his team.

ROAD SAFETY

We have been shocked and saddened by the news of the death of a student from John Smeaton Academy while on his bicycle on Bullerthorpe Lane this week. This tragedy follows the death of a student from The Stephen Longfellow Academy early this month while on his way home. In both circumstances I have written on your behalf offering our support and condolences.

Last week we had one of our own students hit by a car on the way to school. He was very fortunate, with only slight injuries being sustained. It was however a very frightening moment for all concerned.

We have spoken with the Police about the safety of our children on their way to and from school, and they will arrange for visitors to come into school to teach road safety to our students. We can never be complacent about these matters so I would ask that you take this opportunity to reinforce road safety messages at home to complement that undertaken at the academy.

Thank you again for your support. We reopen after the half term break and I wish you all a safe and restful break and we reopen at 8.45am on Monday 5th November.

Yours sincerely



CHRISTOPHER WALSH
Principal