

11<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Dear Parents & Carers

Well, since my message yesterday there has been a change in the performance and fortunes of the England football team and exciting final to look forward to on Sunday evening. It has been great to see the way that this common talking point can unite a community and bring people together.

I wanted today to talk a little about some of the recent changes at school and the impact that they have been having for the benefit of the students.

#### **Playground zoning and impacts:**

While adjusting to changes is always a process, students have adapted to the new zoning of unstructured time extremely well. It has noticeably led to a calmer and more settled atmosphere at lunchtime and breaktime. This is supported by our behaviour data – we have seen a significant reduction in the full range of behaviour incidents we record on Arbor, but most importantly those which relate most to the reason for the change- ensuring that students feel safe at break and lunchtime. Our data shows that the number of physical incidents between students logged (that range from dangerous conduct, pushing and shoving all the way to fighting) has more than halved since the introduction of the zones in comparison to the same time period last year and the first half of term. It is definitely making a positive difference. Some students have raised questions about friendships across year groups and sibling interactions as being no longer possible which I want to clarify is not the case. The main hall is open to all year groups to sit, eat and socialise together. Moreover, extra-curricular activities and clubs span all year groups too.

#### **New toilets and impact:**

When I became a Headteacher, I never anticipated quite how often I would end up talking about toilets, but I understand how important a part of the school experience they are for the students.

Another change from half-term was the opening of new single occupancy toilets in B block that can remain open throughout the day. This has enabled us to only open the multiple occupancy toilets when there is staff duty supervision and controls on numbers in place. The biggest impact that has been seen for the benefit of all students is that while before half term we had frequent toilet vandalism and incidences of vaping from a minority leading to closures of the facilities and costly repairs impacting upon all students – this has not been the case since half term. We have not had to close any toilet facilities at all this half term due to damage. The new toilets have vape sensors and any incidences of students vaping have been immediately dealt with and sanctions put in place. Bringing a vape into school or using one is a suspension level sanction for students – please remind your son or daughter of this, but also more importantly the highly addictive and known and unknown health impacts of vapes. Please also be aware that deodorants and sprays are also banned from the school site and that these too set off the toilet sensors and will receive the same sanction if used within the toilets.

Ultimately, both of these changes have already started to evidentially deliver improvements to the school experience for the often quiet majority of students in our community. Thank you for your support in reiterating the reasons why these changes have been made, the differences that they are making and warning against the health and school sanction consequences of not making the right decisions.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Foster', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mr P Foster

Headteacher