

Our Ref: SDN/KON

July 2018

ALL Parents/Carers

Dear Parent/Carer

It is with great pleasure that I take over the reins as the Head Teacher of Dormston School. I am sure many of you will be aware that I have been working at the school for 14 years so I am well aware of the needs and requirements of the school. When I first came to the school as Assistant Head Teacher I only intended to stay for a few years, as a step towards moving on in my career, but I very quickly found that Dormston School is a great place to study and work. Fourteen years later I have now been given the great privilege of leading the school.

I firmly believe that when schools work in partnership with parents and the local community they can only go from strength to strength. I am certain that you will share the high hopes and aspirations that we have for all pupils. I believe that no matter what pupils want to do with their future they should all be encouraged to aim high and be the very best they can be.

I always say to pupils that if you can say, every day, hand on heart, that you have tried your best, no one will ask any more of you. We will expect all pupils who come to this school to give us their very best and subsequently, be proud of what they achieve and who they are.

We will continue to work with all our teaching staff to ensure that we plan and teach lessons that are challenging and engaging. Our teachers are monitored regularly and work hard to ensure that children receive the education that is appropriate to them. It is my aim to make sure that all of our teachers have the right resources to ensure that great lesson planning, teaching and regular, informative marking stay right at the top of the priority list.

The attendance of our pupils is vitally important. Every day that pupils are absent means they fall behind with their studies. I would like all of our pupils to be above 97% attendance (100% would be fantastic!! - pupils who achieve 100% attendance will be recognised and rewarded). I think it is interesting to note that pupils whose attendance falls to 90% over five years will have missed 20 weeks of learning. This equates to a full half year. If your child's attendance starts to decline we will alert you very quickly and stay in regular contact to help you improve the situation.

We have so many fantastic students in the school and our new team of student leaders ably led by the Head Boys and Girls are a shining example of this. You may notice that in September the Student Leadership Teams will return in very smart grey blazers with purple edged lapels. This is to further recognise their position within the school. I hope that every pupil in Year 7 to 10 will aspire to be part of that team in years to come.

As always, we will expect the very highest standards of behaviour from all pupils in the new school year. That means pupils being polite and respectful to staff and each other and we will not tolerate aggressive,

abusive or disrespectful behaviour in any form. I want every pupil that comes to Dormston School to feel safe, happy and know that their learning is of the highest importance without disturbance or interruption from any other pupil.

At some point during the school holidays I know that many parents and carers will be buying school uniform. I would kindly request that you only buy items that fit within the school uniform policy. To help you do this I have attached our uniform guidelines and shoe requirements. If you are in any doubt at all about items of school uniform please contact your child's Head of House for further clarification.

There will be some very exciting building developments over the summer break. The social space for pupils has always been an issue in school and in an ideal world we would have lots more open playing fields. However, over the past few years we have upgraded many areas to provide pupils with the environment they deserve. This year we are going to alter the space between A block and B block to provide more outdoor seating. The toilets in D block will also be upgraded to the usual high standard. Textiles will be moving into a refurbished room near to Design Technology and several other classrooms will also be refurbished. The location of the Geography and RE Department will change. The security on site is also being upgraded so that we can continue to ensure all of our pupils are as safe as possible.

Keeping you fully informed about what's happening in the school is vitally important to me. From early September you will receive a 'Weekly Bulletin' which will hopefully keep you fully updated with what's happening in school. We welcome your feedback and you will also shortly be asked to provide us with your thoughts and suggestions so that we can continue to improve the way we communicate with parents and carers. I realise that it can sometimes be difficult to get through on the phone to Reception and we are currently looking at ways to rectify this issue. Please be assured we welcome friendly visits to the school so if you need to discuss matters that are important to you please feel free to drop in to the school or call us in order to book an appointment. Please note that due to teaching commitments it may not always be possible to see you immediately but we will get back to you as soon as possible. We aim to respond to all queries within 48 hours.

You are all invited to the '**Head Teacher Introduction Evening' on Thursday 4 October 2018 at 7.00pm**. I will talk about my plans and ideas for the school and then there will be a chance to talk to the Senior Management Team afterwards to ask any questions. Refreshments will be available. A separate letter will be sent to you in September regarding this evening with a reply slip to let us know if you would like to attend.

Can I remind you that the new term will begin on Tuesday 4 September 2018 and all pupils must be at school by the normal time of 8.40am. **Please note that we will also close early at 11.30am on Friday 7 September 2018 to allow our staff to undertake essential Safeguarding training.**

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a safe and happy summer. I look forward to working with you all in September.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Dixon
Head Teacher (September 2018)