



**Letter Number 2: Years 7-9**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Dear Parents/carers

A very Happy New Year to you and your family. I know 729 of our parents managed to attend meetings with their child's form tutor before Christmas and receive their **end of term report** and the **parent calendar for Spring 2018**. I think everyone who attended agreed that this was a very worthwhile event and one we hope to repeat at the end of spring term. We also posted the reports to parents unable to attend. Please do let your child's form tutor know if you did not receive the report or if you wish to arrange a follow up meeting.

**The Autumn Term assessments** of course give you a snap shot of how your son/daughter has learned and understood the work of the Autumn Term. I have looked closely at their outcomes and progress across all the year groups in KS3. Years 8 and 9 are making strides in English and the numbers of students achieving high grades (7+) in Year 9 in maths, science, geography and modern languages is pleasing. Years 7 had their first taste of formal assessments across eleven subjects and are in many cases still coming to terms with how to prepare for the assessments. So many students entered the secondary academy with high SATs scores that progress from their base line is quite demanding. However, as others years I have no doubt they will learn from the Autumn assessments and put this experience to good effects in the Spring assessments. This is why **review week** after their assessments is so important across the whole academy.

This term is a significant one for **Year 9** as they begin the process of looking at **their GCSE pathways**. I am sure Year 9 will take the process very seriously and look at the options available and work hard in the next two terms to put themselves in the best position for choosing and starting their GCSEs.

**House Charity**

As ever, I was totally impressed by the efforts made by our House teams, the leadership by the Heads of House, the support from so many sixth formers and the fundraising efforts of all our four houses during House Charity Week. After this fantastic effort by our students and staff we raised:

**£4,158.98**

House	TOTAL	Charity
Curie	£1,715.63	UNICEF
Newton	£682.47	Royal Society for Blind Children
Plato	£804.42	Save the Children
Socrates	£956.48	Bloodwise



We also acknowledge one or two students in each house who made a significant effort to support their house fundraising and are recognised as our special **fundraisers of the term:**

**Curie** – Dhruv Gajjar (Year 13)

**Newton** – Bathseba Fesehazion-Mahray (Year 10) and Maimona Ahmed Sultan (Year 10)

**Plato** – Azka Aziz (Year 7) and Salli Boyeh (Year 7)

**Socrates** – Parbes Ahmed (Year 11)

Last term saw a particular emphasis on **developing our students literacy through extending their vocabulary and reading.** I have been impressed by the efforts that Year 7 have made on the Lexia programme and I do hope they have used the holidays to access the programme at home.

In recognition of the importance that we place on being literate alongside our subject awards at the end of term we recognised **the reader of the term:**

**Year 7 – Arthur Sokolov**

**Year 8 – Simrah Khan**

**Year 9 – Hadeal Abdelatti**

And for the first time in Years 7 and 8 the **grammarian of the term:**

**Year 7 – Ghofran Grzezicak**

**Year 8 – Khushi Varsani**

Why is this so important? Quite simply as I hope you have read in the Civitas magazine, the pupils with the biggest vocabulary, and who do the best in school, also read the most. Just ten minutes of concentrated reading everyday exposes us to 1.2 million more words. Thus **it makes a massive difference if your child reads at home.**

So we now look forward to the Spring term, hopefully a couple of new year resolutions that we manage to keep:

**Attendance** remains a key factor for student progress and we regularly acknowledge the many students in year group that maintain a 100% attendance. However, whilst overall attendance was reasonable in the Autumn Term

Year 7 97%

Year 8 96%

Year 9 96.3%

There is certainly room for improvement on the first day of term 4<sup>th</sup> January there were a considerable number of absence that now need to be covered by a note. So please ensure your child attends every day unless genuinely ill.

### **Lateness to school**

As parents know we track this very closely and we are very aware of consistent offenders. We have last term, however, had a growing number of students coming in late with a note saying they were ill

first thing but are now well enough to attend school. This can sometimes happen, but it is very rare. If your child is genuinely ill they should remain at home.

**Ark Academy Code of Conduct** and part of the **Home School Agreement** requires that all students **should go straight home** and not loiter around in the vicinity of the school. Most younges do that, however when there is trouble and anti-social behaviour it stems from students hanging around in groups or making a nuisance of themselves. Again I have been very clear on this point, **students are not permitted to buy food in shops or food outlets** and students walking along the road in school uniform eating chips, McDonalds, Sam's Chicken or whatever, if caught they will have the food confiscated and receive a sanction. Thank you for your support with this.

Finally, I am sure you agree that our students should behave with courtesy and respect in public and particularly on buses. It is so easy for youngsters to forget that they can when in groups be very loud and intimidating. I find it extremely disappointing that the so very many good things our students do and achieve are wiped out by complaints from members of the public about our students behaviour on the buses.

I know some parents expressed a view that they did not know when the end of term assessments were. These are included on the parent calendar but to make doubly sure the assessment period will be:

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March to Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March for Years 7, 8 and 9**

Let us all now look forward to a very productive Spring Term.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Delia Smith', written in a cursive style.

Delia Smith  
Principal

