



Blue Coat Church of England Academy

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Principal: Mr D Smith

9th October 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been a busy start to the new school year. Many of you will have seen that the planned improvements on the crossing on Birmingham Street were completed towards the end of the summer holidays. Work on the new heating system in the Main Building is progressing well. Students last day in school this half term will be Thursday 26th October 2023 (normal time), Friday 27th October 2023 is a staff training day. We will return to school at normal time on Monday 6th November 2023.

We have welcomed a number of new staff to the school at the beginning of this school year:

Mr N. Ahmed – Teacher of Mathematics

Miss N. Azam – Teacher of English

Mr L. Cooper – Teacher of P.E.

Mr S. Dhadwar – Teacher of Computer Science & ICT

Mr Z. Hussain – Teacher of Science & ICT

Miss R. Mays – Teacher of Science

Miss R. O'Grady – Receptionist

Mr L. Roper – Teacher of P.E.

Mrs M. Shakespeare – Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs T. Virk – Teacher of History (Head of Dept. maternity cover)

Mr J. White – Accelerated Reader Co-ordinator

Mr D. Young – Teacher of History

School Partners Football League Game – Saturday 25th November 2023, 3p.m. kick off.

Following the success of the School Partners match last season, we have again been invited to participate in the scheme offering reduced priced tickets for Walsall F.C. against Forest Green Rovers. A separate letter from Walsall F.C. will be sent out this week – the deadline to return forms and make payments will be Friday 27th October 2023.

Student Safety

We have experienced some issues since the start of term with parents/carers parking inappropriately outside the school. No parents/carers are allowed on to the school site to park and we would encourage you to arrange pick-up points away from the immediate vicinity of the school where parking is available.

As the nights draw in we would appreciate your support to ensure that students take sensible precautions when travelling to and from school including avoiding being distracted by mobile phones when crossing roads.

Students must not remain on the school site at the end of the school day unless they are attending a supervised activity.

Lockdown Drill

It's important that we put procedures in place and plan even for those events that are very unlikely to occur. As part of this, we have a safety procedure called "security lockdown". I wanted to make you aware that we'll be practicing this procedure for the first time on Wednesday 11th October 2023.



What is a security lockdown and when would it happen?

A security lockdown procedure is a standard health and safety procedure, similar to a fire drill.

Our security lockdown procedure would be used when there is a threat to the safety of our students, staff and others in the school, and when it's safer for everyone to remain in school rather than evacuate. The aim is to keep people safe by confining them to a secure place of safety.

Situations where our security lockdown procedure may be used include:

- A potentially dangerous person or animal on the school site
- A disturbance or dangerous situation in the local community that could affect the school
- A nearby chemical incident or other risk of air pollution
- An incident related to terrorism

What is our school's security lockdown procedure?

- People in school will be notified that it's in lockdown using a specific lockdown alarm which operates on a separate system to other bells and alarms in school.
- During a lockdown students will move immediately inside to their own, or the nearest, classroom
- We will then take registers to ensure that all students are accounted for.
- We will make sure all students are safe and secure, by securing doors and windows, and drawing blinds
- The emergency services will be called.

Instructions for parents/carers in the event of a security lockdown

In the event of a school lockdown a notice would be placed on our school website and a text message sent to parents/carers.

- Parents/carers should not attempt to call or come to the school at this time, as this may hinder our effort to contact and work with the emergency services.
- Parents/carers should not discuss the event on social media, as this may spread false information and create panic.
- Students will be instructed not to use mobile phones during a lockdown, so parents/carers should not be alarmed if their child doesn't answer their phone.
- If a lockdown continued beyond school hours, parents/carers would be informed, by text message, about any changes to collection arrangements in this circumstance.

Prior to practicing this procedure with students, staff will take time to talk to students about security lockdown procedures and explain why they're important. They'll reassure students after the drill that they are safe, and will emphasise that practicing procedures like this will make sure that the school remains a safe place to learn.

I must emphasise again that this is simply a drill, so that in the very unlikely event of such a situation in the future, our students and staff are fully prepared and can stay safe. If you or your child have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year.

Attendance

Finally, can I please remind all families of the importance of school attendance. Research shows that students who fall below 95% attendance achieve lower exam results, which will impact on future opportunities. If your child has only 90% attendance for their five years in school, it means they will have missed half a school year of education. As a school community we want the very best for all students and this requires full attendance. Thank you in advance for your support with this.

Yours sincerely,



D. Smith
Principal