

The Ladder School

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Our Reference: Newsletter January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Firstly, we would like to welcome all students back and wish you all a Happy New Year. I wanted to share my thanks with parents/carers for their support in the few weeks prior to us breaking up for Christmas. It was humbling to see so many charitable donations, kind words and gifts; thank you.

As we start 2020 there are several pieces of information I wanted to make you aware of, so you have up to date information in relation to school practices/key information.

Term Dates - Spring Term 2020

Term starts: Monday 6 January 2020

Half Term: Monday 17 February 2020 to Friday 21 February 2020

Term ends: Friday 3 April 2020

Easter holiday: Monday 6 April 2020 to Friday 17 April 2020

Training day: Friday 3 April 2020

You will have received your child's progress report over the Christmas holiday and will now have a good idea of how they are performing in their subject areas. For students who have missed time from school or those needing additional exam practice for their Maths, English or Science, we have now launched the "The Ladder School Three 20 Revision Club". This is an after school revision session where they spend 20 minutes working on a Maths, English or Science topic. Students can stay for either 1, 2 or 3 twenty minute sessions on a Monday, Tuesday or Thursday afternoon between 3.00pm and 4.00pm. Students studying vocational subjects such as Animal Care, Business, Art and Health and Social Care have ongoing coursework tasks which they should be working on at regular intervals.

As part of our commitment to ensure that our students receive outstanding personalised support, we have developed 'The Ladder Lounge'. This is a modified Learning zone within school, which has been created to provide our students with a predictable, accessible and safe environment that offers low arousal, in terms of people, sounds, noise and movement. This area is designed to offer students an opportunity to access learning, on a one-to-one basis, away from the sensory overload of a busy classroom setting. This may be the work taking place in the main classroom or a related activity/task. Students who benefit from these facilities often present behaviour of concern in a traditional classroom; which in turn may lead to them being taught in an alternative environment, for at least part of the school day. Interventions such as Literacy, Numeracy and Lego based therapy may also take place in this area. This means that students will be offered the opportunity to learn in both classrooms and learning zones, in accordance with their best interests and preferences. From time to time, learning zones may be used to provide students with the space and time to regulate their emotions with support from a member of staff.

We also have quiet/reflection rooms which are not teaching rooms. These modified areas have been created to provide a place of safety for children, experiencing overwhelming emotions such as anxiety, confusion, fear, frustration and anger, in which they can calm



down. There are times when some students need access to a quiet, calming and reflective space. It is a space to help a student to calm, begin to use self-regulation skills and time to reflect. When a student starts at The Ladder School, there is a discussion about the way in which it is best for them to be supported if/when they become anxious, confused, fearful, frustrated or angry. If it is thought that the use of quiet/reflection rooms might be necessary at some point, this is explored during that discussion.

We will also be welcoming 3 Post Graduates on placement from the University of Derby who are completing their Master Degrees in Drama/Music/Art therapy. This will involve them working on a 1:1 basis with students who we feel would benefit from additional therapeutic intervention.

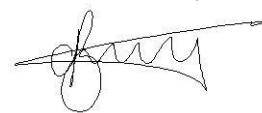
Staff have participated in Team Teach Training, which means staff have received specialist instruction on using physical interventions with students. If a student is putting themselves or others in danger, staff might need to physically intervene to ensure they can keep the individual, the other staff and students safe. Team Teach is focused around de-escalating situations and a hold would only ever be used in exceptional circumstances. Further information can be found on the policy on the school website.

The Local Governing Body is a shared organisation between Walsall Studio School and The Ladder School and we are looking to recruit a parent/carer as a governor to represent the views of parents and carers from the two schools. If you are interested or would like further information, please contact Mr Bury via the school reception for a discussion around the responsibilities and commitments required.

During Skills Sessions this term, we will be covering a range of topics. These include ageing, rights and choices, knife crime, racism, refugees and the armed forces. We have also changed the grouping of Skills to ensure students have consistency, being taught with the same staff member. This will allow students to discuss sensitive topics openly with familiar staff members. If you have any questions in relation to the topics above, please get in touch with Miss Ball.

Finally, we look forward to a successful term, if you have any questions please get in touch with your child's Learning Coach in the first instance. Don't forget to follow us on Twitter @ladderschool to hear all the latest news and updates.

Yours sincerely



Mr C Bury
Principal

