Aston Academy
Aughton Road, Swallownest
Sheffield S26 4SF
t: 0114 287 2171
e: info@astonacademy.org
w: astonacademy.org

Principal: James Graham BSc (Hons), PGCE
CEO: Rebecca Scutt BSc (Hons), PGCE

Aston
ACADEMY

Striving for **Excellence**
Empowering Achievement
Shaping **Learning**

Dear Parent/Carer,

This week brought the very upsetting news that intruders gained access to our school site and caused significant damage through vandalism. We pride ourselves on being a place where people feel a genuine sense of belonging and take pride in our community, so it is difficult to understand why anyone would choose to target our school in this way.

However, I would like to say a huge thank you to our incredible site team, our security company and South Yorkshire Police for their swift support and professionalism. Their efforts have already resulted in arrests, CCTV identifications and the sharing of potential suspect information by members of our local community.

A school is far more than bricks and mortar. When incidents like this happen, they often reveal the true strength of the people within it. Throughout this week, we have seen the resilience, determination and pride of our staff, students and wider community. It has been heartening to see so many people stand together and make it clear that this kind of anti-social behaviour has no place in our school or our community.

Moving on to happier news, there are few better examples of community spirit and service than our pastoral leader, Mr Pete Scantlebury. Many of our parents and carers will already know what an exceptional job Pete does in supporting our students and families, but this week he received recognition beyond our academy. Rotherham Council invited Pete to contribute to the international campaign, 16 Days of Action Against Gender-Based Violence. This important campaign aims to raise awareness of violence against women and girls, encourage conversations around respect and equality, and inspire individuals, communities and organisations to take action.

Pete was selected to speak as a representative of Men of Rotherham: Stronger Together, a campaign that brings together the voices of local men from all walks of

life to champion respect, equality and safety for women and girls. Through personal stories and conversations, the campaign encourages men to reflect on their attitudes, challenge harmful behaviours and demonstrate how respect can be shown through everyday actions.

You can find out more about the campaign, and view the videos once they are published, by visiting:

https://www.saferrotherham.org.uk/campaigns

On Monday, our Year 11 students took part in a mock interview experience. We welcomed a wide range of employers and local business leaders into the academy to conduct interviews with every Year 11 student. It was a fantastic opportunity for our young people to experience a realistic interview setting while receiving valuable feedback from professionals.

We were incredibly proud of how our students represented themselves. One student told me, *"I felt very nervous going in, but now I feel extremely proud of myself."* Those are exactly the emotions we want our students to experience: nerves before stepping outside their comfort zone, followed by pride when they realise what they are capable of achieving.

One interviewer summed up the day perfectly:

> **"What impressed us most, though, was the students themselves. Every single student I interviewed was engaged, enthusiastic and genuinely keen to do well. That doesn't happen by accident. It comes from the culture and environment you have created within the school, and I can assure you it isn't something we see everywhere."**

A special mention must go to Mrs Adams and Mr Shaw for their hard work in planning and organising the event. It required a huge amount of preparation, but the rewards for our students made every effort worthwhile.

We are pleased to let you know that Schoolwear Solutions will be returning to school with their pop-up uniform shop on Wednesday 25 November, from 3:00pm to 5:00pm, in the Student Reception.

Families will be able to browse and purchase uniform items directly from the supplier, with plenty of opportunities to try items on before buying. Schoolwear Solutions staff will be available throughout the event to answer questions and help with sizing.

Please see the link below for more information about our uniform and purchasing options. If you are thinking ahead to January, this is an ideal opportunity to organise any uniform replacements before the Christmas rush.

https://www.schoolwearsolutions.com/our-schools/aston-academy/

Finally, I was delighted to see a new club begin this week: Lego Club, hosted by our fantastic Science teacher, Miss Bamber. It is another welcome addition to the wide range of opportunities available to our students each week. A plea also, if you have any spare or unused Lego that needs a new home, we would very gladly accept donations. Just drop Miss Bamber an email (rebecca.bamber@astonacademy.org) or send it in. Every brick helps!

If your child has not yet joined a club, I cannot stress enough the benefits it can bring. Whether it is developing new skills, making new friends or supporting wellbeing, extracurricular activities offer experiences that can have a lasting impact. We regularly encourage students to "say yes to opportunities" because you never know where they may lead.

As the following quotes remind us:

> **"Like LEGO, life presents us with individual pieces every day. The opportunities we create depend not on the pieces we are given, but on how we choose to build with them."**
>
> **"The beauty of LEGO is that there is more than one way to build. The beauty of life is that there is more than one path to success."**

Have a wonderful weekend when it arrives.

The combination of home, school and student will make a difference.

Best regards,

James Graham
Principal

https://www.saferrotherham.org.uk/campaigns