



# Aston Academy

## Specialising in Maths & Computing

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Dear Parent/Carer

At Aston Academy we value input from parents/carers and aim to work with you to support your son/daughter to achieve their full potential. To achieve this, we held our latest **parent/carers forum meeting** on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June and have spoken to many other parents via telephone meetings and email.

To ensure all parents / carers are kept informed of the agenda items and main discussion points I have included the main actions taken from the meeting below.

### Agenda June 2023

- 1) Recap the minutes from the term 2 meeting 15th March 2023 (10 mins)
- 2) Discuss changes for the new academic year Sept 2023 - uniform, behaviour approach. (15 mins)
- 3) New school updates (10 mins)
- 4) Review term 1 and 2 (15 mins)
- 5) AOB

#### 1. Recap the minutes from the term 2 meeting 15th March 2023

The main focus in the term 2 meeting was to discuss changes to the behaviour policy and explain the action being taken to address punctuality to lessons.

The overall feedback from the forum was that the messages for action 1 behaviour were not detailed enough to allow parents/carers to have discussions with their child at home and support correcting the behaviour. The forum felt the action 1 text messages were not needed but should come in when action 2 or above is given but the key aspect is a phone call home to explain why so there is contact and parents/carers can give a consistent message to support school.

The slow turnaround for detentions was highlighted as a concern. For example, some students may get a detention from an issue on the Wednesday but then not sit the actual detention until the following Tuesday. In this time parents/carers felt the student had lost focus on what they were sitting the detention for.

Parents and Carers felt the punctuality tracking was important during the school day and welcomed the plans to tackle lateness within the school day. Period 1 lateness was still an area to monitor for certain students due to bus services running late and not necessarily the students fault.

Toilet behaviour by some students was highlighted as much improved but still at times an area for concern for students and parents and carers asked for this to be a priority area.

### Parent / Carer – Points raised

#### You Said:

- The action 1 text messages lack clarity and information to support correcting poor behaviour. Parents/carers felt they lost impact and were needed more from action 2/C2 level.

#### We Did:

- The action 1 text message will be changed and the policy will be updated. The messages will be removed from the system and staff will be asked to call directly home for students reaching a C3 OR C4 sanction.

**You Said:**

- The turnaround time for detentions was too long and by the time the detention was completed the incident could be 5 days ago which decreased the impact.

**We Did:**

- Detentions will now be the following night or the next available evening the student can complete it. This will be arranged through a discussion with the classroom teacher when they ring home to explain why the sanction has been given. This will reduce the time between incident and consequence.

**You Said:**

- Student behaviour in toilets is much improved from the year group split and staff duty at break and lunch but some concerns about lesson time.

**We Did:**

- As part of the classroom support duties that staff complete each period in school a staff member will monitor south corridor and toilet access. Student voice feedback being completed to track the impact of this.

**2. Discuss changes for the new academic year Sept 2023 - uniform, behaviour approach. (15 mins)**

The first change shared with parents / carers was the timing of the school day. To meet DFE guidance the school day will be increased by 10 mins. The 10 mins has been added to the Tutor and PSHCE time to allow all statutory elements of the curriculum to be delivered in this time.

**Increased length of School day inline with DFE guidance. (32.5 hours)**

8:40 am – 9:40am – Lesson 1

9:40am – 10:40am – Lesson 2

10:40am – 10:55am – Breaktime

10:55am – 11:30am – Tutor Time / PSHCE

11:30am – 12:30pm – Lesson 3

12:30pm – 13:10pm – Lunch

13:10pm – 14:10pm – Lesson 4

14:10pm – 15:10pm – Lesson 5

15:10pm – 16:15pm – Extra Curricular Clubs

**The forum then discussed changes to school uniform and books:**

- School Shoes rather than plain black footwear.
- Clip on Tie rather than regular tie.
- School Bag must be brought every day (large enough to hold an A4 book).
- Children expected take books home – teacher feedback will inform parents/carers of improvements they need to make.

**Behaviour policy amendments**

- Isolation has been removed and replaced with Reflection. This includes a piece of work students complete to reflect back on what they got wrong and how they could avoid this in future. Students are provided with subject specific work and supported by a HLTA throughout the day.
- Internal suspension created to reduce the number of suspensions from school that are required and give an additional layer of support for our most vulnerable students.
- Classroom consequences to replace the actions given - C1 – first warning, C2 – second warning, C3 – spoken to outside the room, C4 – faculty referral to work in another room.

**You Said:**

The change to study PSHCE in tutor time and create an additional lesson in the timetable was positive.

**We Did:**

Regular monitoring and evaluation will take place to ensure all statutory PSHCE syllabus is delivered in the thorough manner within this time.

**You Said:**

The DFE says that parents should not have to incur additional costs for uniform- I have bought uniform already - I wont stipulate extra costs.

I will have to pay hundreds of pounds for extra pairs of shoes.

**We Did:**

In acknowledgement of the current financial climate leadership team have met to identify areas we can support our families. A collection of new and pre-loved uniform and PE kit has been gathered and will be available throughout the academic year for parents and carers to purchase for £1 an item. All items are washed and ironed and hung on rails in student reception. As well as being available during the school day these items will be available at all school events including year team meetings, consultation evenings and other school events.

**You Said:**

There is no consistency- my son was told that his uniform was 'good' but there were two errors.

Teachers are so inconsistent with the policy.

**You Said:**

There was not consultation with parents / carers on the new uniform policy.

**We Did:**

A letter was sent to all parents / carers providing them an opportunity to raise any opinions on the new uniform changes both positive or negative. The information received was discussed at the governors meeting to review the final decision.

**We Did:**

School leaders are running CPD training around the new expectations and policies to ensure consistency throughout the staff.

**You Said:**

A member of the forum explained that she was a physio. She was very impressed with the school allowing trainers. However, she had to send in a letter as her daughter has medical difficulties. She was told to wear ballet shoes. But since then, the school have made an exception for her to wear trainers. She doesn't want her daughter to be singled out and cannot understand why all children can't wear them.

**We Did:**

This was discussed at the governor meeting on 17.07.23. School will always support students with medical evidence that indicate a certain type of footwear is required as advised by a medical professional.

**You Said:**

The change from trainers to school shoes will affect my child's mental health.

**We Did:**

As a school we take the mental health and wellbeing of our students very seriously. This is why we invest in support from Kooth (mental health support programme) throughout the year and at all consultation evening events, and why we run a broad and varied enrichment and extra-curricular programme. We have also spoken to the other secondary school in Rotherham and Sheffield that have a 'school shoes' policy and none of the schools have identified a link between the footwear worn and student mental health.

**You Said:**

The parent / carer forum agreed with the need for bags.

**We Did:**

We explained the reason for both changes. During Covid, students had to leave books in school and this habit has continued. From September 2023 students will be expected to take all books home, unless they are in for teacher marking. This will allow parents / carers the ability to observe what work has been completed and read teacher feedback.

**3. New School Updates****School Website**

The forum was shown the new Academy website and asked to visit it before the next forum meeting to give feedback on the new layout and information shared.

**4. Review of the Pastoral Structure**

Following the parent/carer questionnaire earlier in the academic year we reviewed the pastoral structures in place for each year group to ensure support for all students.

In the forum meeting I was able to share the new pastoral structures with the addition of the Pastoral Learning Lead (PLL) roles in each year group. This member of staff is a teaching member of staff with additional hours to support students in the year group they are working with. This means the new year team structure from HT6 is:

Learning Progress Manager (LPM) → Pastoral Learning Lead (PLL) → Assistant Vice Principal (AVP)

**You Said:**

Parents / Carers welcomed the new updated website and its ease of use. Some members of the forum had not accessed the new site yet.

**We Did:**

We thanked the forum for the feedback and informed the group that additional information will be added over the summer

**You Said:**

Parents / Carers welcomed the new layer of support for each year group.

**We Did:**

The impact of the new PLL role will be monitored throughout the new academic year through student voice, staff surveys and parent / carer feedback.

**You Said:**

Some policies on the website had not been updated.

**We Did:**

All policies online have been checked to ensure the correct documents are available for visitors to the site.

**5. AOB**Student Council

- Questions about the student council in school. Mr Esberger explained how children's views are listened to here and actions are taken. The school council process was explained to the forum. One parent supported this as her child had told her about the differences they were making.

Many Thanks

**Mr C Esberger**

**Assistant Vice Principal**