

2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

A lot has been happening in preparation for the new academic year and in response to the Ofsted report here in the Academy.

I wanted to share with you some of the things that will be different and focussed on improvement for the year ahead of which I would really like your support.

Firstly, it was great to have parents demonstrate their support by attending the parent evening post Ofsted feedback. It was sobering for myself and the staff present to be aware of the concerns you have. Much of the content of this letter is in response to those main areas of concerns which were communication, safety and bullying of students and disruptive behaviour. These were the main areas we have focussed on presently and will look to address other areas in future meetings. These meeting times will be published later ; they will run every half term and will be in person and virtual to make attendance to each easier.

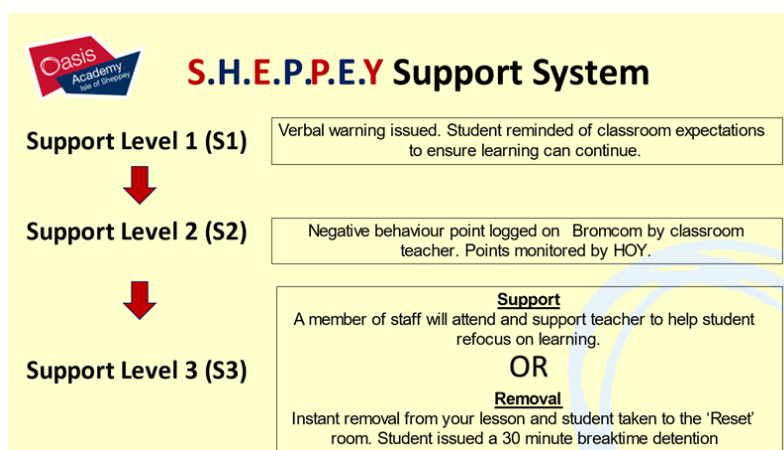
## BEHAVIOUR

### As parents you told us “students behaviour is poor and disruptive” :

We will be introducing a simplified rules of the academy: **Ready; Respectful; Safe**. This will simply detail the expectations eg “please do not run in the corridors, it is not **safe** to do so”. Expectations around behaviour and language will be taught in our **first** day tutor and assembly sessions.

### As parents you told us lessons are disruptive:

Students who continue to disrupt lessons will be removed and not placed back into the lesson therefore immediately stopping disruption. (See below):



A Booth

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## **STAYING SAFE AND BULLYING**

### **You and your son/daughters told us “they do not feel safe and are bullied”**

We now have an instant way of students telling staff they have a safeguarding concern by means of a QR code. These will be codes that go straight to our safeguarding team of staff who can deal with the immediacy of the concern.

Staff have been challenged that we all must challenge any homophobic, sexist, misogynistic and sexist comments and record such instances on our academy information system, for further action and follow up. A programme of personal and character development will be taught outlining the importance of inclusivity and being a young citizen. These in themselves will be part of a bigger action plan to make sure we are a safe academy.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **You said “when we have a problem we don’t know who to talk to and when we do, know one gets back to us”**

We will send separately the refined effective communication system we are proposing. What we are pledging is we will respond within 24 hours of receiving the email, unless it is a safeguarding issue in which there will be a direct line of communication where it will be dealt with directly by the safeguarding team. I am confident this system will meet expectations of you being able to contact the correct person and get an answer to your query speedily.

## **High expectations**

As we begin the new academic year and following three days of training and development, the staff will be ready to support the changes needed to move the academy forward and address the issue raised in the report and by you as parents/carers. There are some other areas I would like to mention and make clear for us to have the best start:

### **iPad**

iPads were not used effectively by all staff in all lessons last year. Students will now be expected to bring their iPad as part of the normal equipment every day. The iPad will be used at least once every day and this will increase more and more as we move forward. The student timetable will be on the device so it will be used for this too.

We will also be introducing an iPad reading programme called reading plus to improve levels of literacy.

Please make sure your son/daughter’s device is bought to the academy on the very first day; even if it is now broken please bring it in so we can then look to repair or replace it. iPads will continue to be part of the everyday classroom and academy life for your son/daughter.

**Executive Principal – Mr A Booth**

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Year 7 students, a home user agreement link for the iPad will be shared with parents and carers for their completion. Upon the home user agreement being completed and submitted, your son/daughter will receive their Horizons iPad during the first days of attending the academy. This will be accompanied by a charger and protective case.

#### **Equipment and uniform:**

We want to remove obstacles and to make the best possible start. We clearly need your support in making sure your son/daughter is **ready** to learn. If your son/daughter comes to school in the correct uniform and equipment, it will assist us in maintaining the highest of expectations.

We have listened to students and made some changes to the uniform regarding long socks and also black trainers being worn as part of uniform (see website or earlier letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022). Students who opt to wear a skirt as part of their uniform must ensure these are knee length and made from a non-stretch material. Could I ask you please to refer to the earlier letter or the academy website to ensure your son/daughter have the correct uniform and equipment. This will mean we are not losing time in dealing with non-compliance nor starting the day negatively. This will tremendously help us in making sure staff can implement the changes staff have been trained in around the expectations we have for our students.

#### **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

##### **You said “there was not enough for our son/daughters to do”**

We will be having an enhanced focus on extra-curricular activities for this academic year. Members of staff are currently finalising their offers for our students so activities and clubs can be advertised ready to begin on Monday, 19th September. There will be a big emphasis on the offer being equal for students on both the Minster and Sheerness campuses. Activities will be advertised inside school, on our social media pages and also on our website. It would be great to see as many students as possible becoming involved in these activities.

I am positive that if we all pull together we can make this academy your academy and one to be very proud of.

Thank you.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A Booth", is written over a horizontal line.

**Mr A Booth**  
Executive Principal

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