



*Success nothing less*

16<sup>th</sup> December 2016

Dear Parent/Carer,

This term has passed by so quickly, it seems only a minute since I first started. The focus of the Academy has been to accelerate student progress during every one hour of lessons, we call them 'Golden Hours'. Staff are working hard to ensure that all five of these 'Golden Hours' every day deliver excellent results for all our students, 'Success, nothing less!'. It has been a very busy end to the term with the usual practices for Christmas events whilst continuing our drive on progress as well as a visit from OFSTED and the Department for Education, as the regional Schools Commissioner is interested in our journey. We will not receive the report until the New Year but we are very pleased with the progress the Academy has made from last inspection. I would like to thank the staff for their hard work all year, parents and carers for their full support and especially our wonderful students that really impressed the inspectors so much and showed pride in what Aspire is really about.

The year 11 students have taken their first Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs) and I am pleased to report that their attitude and behaviour throughout was exemplary. They have started their final year working hard and making good progress towards their GCSE examinations in June. To support their journey staff have created a 'night club' for students to join, where they can study quietly after school and really boost their grades. As parents/carers you may want to help your child by encouraging their participation in after school activities so that they can reach their full potential.

We have opened our doors wide this term and welcomed in younger students and staff from local primary schools (Layton, Boundary and Claremont) to take part in various Science and Technology events. I am thrilled that the links between our Academy and the local primary schools are really strong and are supporting the improved progress across the transition between year 6 and 7.

I am sure many of you are aware that Mr Simkins is retiring (for the second time!) at the end of this term. It is with a heavy heart that we say goodbye to him and I am sure you join me in thanking him for all his amazing work getting Aspire to this point. None of us can forget where we came from two years ago and how much hard work and personal effort Mr Simkins has given to make sure I have a stable, respectful and tolerant Academy to take over. His words, assemblies and character are evident all over the Academy and will stay that way, certainly as long as I am Principal. He has been an inspiration to us all in his relentless drive to make things the best they can be for all our youngsters and we wish him a very happy retirement.

### **Dates for your diary**

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December – Charlotte's Day** (Collecting for Ronald McDonald House). All students can wear Christmas Jumpers or a Christmas item but must wear it over their uniform and wear their blazers too! There will be a pantomime by the staff, so all students should be in and bring the Christmas cheer with them.

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 – Year 10 students start their internal examinations for two weeks.**  
**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2:00pm to 3:00pm - Year 7 celebration afternoon with Primary school colleagues**  
**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February – Year 11 students start their second Pre-Public Examinations**  
**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 3:30pm to 5:30pm** is the Year 7 Progress Evening. We invite all parents and carers to come along and find out how well your child is progressing as an Aspire student.  
**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February 3:30pm to 5:30pm**, is the Year 10 Progress Evening.  
**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February School Closes at the end of the day for half term**

To continue to reinforce our vision, ethos and culture we all need to **PAUSE** for a moment. **PAUSE** has become **Aspire's** critical acronym and underpins everything we do. It represents:

- **P**unctuality to school is essential. 1 minute late will lead to a 1 hour detention the same night.
- **A**ttendance to school is non-negotiable. To encourage this there are/will be plenty of rewards.
- **U**niform must be correct every day. A bag, black shoes, blazers, ties etc. are essential.
- **S**afe and Sensible Behaviour must be the norm so everyone is safe.
- **H**igh **E**xpectations & Exam Performance are the keys to student success.

We expect **ALL** of our students to accept, and respond positively to these **key** essentials to life at Aspire and for **all** parents and carers to support us with this message.

Please do not forget that the school closes on **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016 at 1.20pm for Christmas holiday** and re-opens at **8.35am on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017**.

I am really pleased with the attitude and commitment of our students but I would really like to strengthen the relationship with you the parents and carers. It is always our pleasure to celebrate student successes with you in person at our Parents Evenings. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our parents and carers a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. I look forward to seeing you at all the exciting activities we have planned over the next half term.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Shuttleworth-Brown  
Principal