

LETTER FROM MR WILSON

Welcome to the final edition of Newsflash for this half term.

As you will be aware, we were subject to a full OFSTED Inspection earlier this half term. We have now received the report, a copy of which can be found on the Academy website, and I am pleased to be able to share some of the findings with you in this week's edition of Newsflash.

The main findings of the Inspection, as detailed in the Report, are that:

- Leadership and management are good; this is an improving Academy that is well led.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare for students are good.
- Students' behaviour is good. Students are eager to learn and are embracing a stronger work ethos.
- The Academy is a safe and caring community.
- Students are making better progress and their attainment is improving.
- The % of students making expected progress in English is higher than the national average.
- Work with outstanding schools has helped plan for improvement.
- Governance is good and strongly supports Academy improvement.

The overall effectiveness of any school can be judged as Outstanding (Grade 1), Good (Grade 2), Requires Improvement (Grade 3) or Inadequate (Grade 4). In its previous full Inspection, in March 2014, the Academy was judged as Inadequate. Whilst the OFSTED grading of a school can drop by more than one grade at a time, depending on the findings of an Inspection, it is very difficult, and virtually unheard of, for a school to move up by more than one grade at a time if the school has improved.

So, whilst a school can go down from Outstanding to Inadequate in one go, a school can usually only move up by one grade at an Inspection either from Inadequate to Requires Improvement, or from Requires Improvement to Good, or from Good to Outstanding. The reason for this is that OFSTED usually want to see that any improvements in a school are sustained over a period of time and are reluctant, therefore, to move a school up too quickly. As such, Droylsden Academy is now graded as Requires Improvement, or what was previously described on the old OFSTED framework as Satisfactory. Clearly, I am pleased that we have jumped this first hurdle, but I am also delighted that so many aspects of Academy life, if not yet the overall effectiveness, are now judged as Good.

I agree with the findings of the Inspection Team; whilst we are certainly well on the way to being judged as Good, there are still areas where we need to improve. Teaching has improved significantly over the last six months, and there are now many examples of outstanding practice, but it is not yet consistently good across the whole Academy. We need to ensure that our students who are classed as disadvantaged attend as regularly and make as much progress as our other students. We need to ensure that our most able students are consistently stretched and challenged. We need to ensure that we build on the improvements already made in Maths and Science and that progress in these subjects is in line with or above national as, indeed, it already is in English.

Bringing about an improvement in any organisation can be a difficult and challenging process; it is certainly a team effort for everyone involved and, once again, I would like to thank you as parents and carers, as well as staff and students, for the part you are continuing to play in driving up standards and expectations.

With the focus on OFSTED, it is hard to believe that we have been back for eight weeks since the summer holidays. I feel we have had a really positive start to this academic year and, although I will really enjoy the time with my young family next week, I am already looking forward to the challenges of the next half term leading up to Christmas. I hope that your child has enjoyed the first half term and that they too have an enjoyable break.

Best wishes

Mr P. Wilson
Headteacher

GCSE COUNTDOWN

Year 11, you are now 8 weeks into your final year and there are only 22 school weeks left, just 110 days in school, until your first GCSE exam.

Your pre public examinations start on Monday 9th November. If you want to achieve and exceed your target grades next summer then you will prepare thoroughly for your pre public exams. You should spend time over the half term holiday, even if only for 2 or 3 hours a day, to read through your notes and familiarise yourself with all of the topics you have covered through Years 10 and 11. Every time you read through your work, a little bit more sticks with you and it will make things easier for you next summer. If there are things that you don't understand then you can get help and advice from your teachers now and not wait until it is too late. **By preparing thoroughly now, you are taking control of your exam preparation and doing everything you can to ensure GCSE achievement and success next summer.**

Well done to the Year 11 students who took part in their six hour Drama exam last week. Your application, behaviour and commitment were exemplary and you were the epitome of hard working and resilient students. Ms Scantlebury and Mr Turnball are really proud of the group and are looking forward to celebrating your marks with you all in due course. Well done!

Great learning through politeness, honesty and hard work

GCSE French speaking exams have taken place this week. We hope they have gone well and look forward to hearing about the results.

IN THE NEWS THIS WEEK

The Academy holds its annual Careers and Aspirations Evening where students from Years 9, 10 and 11 had the opportunity to speak with local employers, colleges, universities and training providers and gain an insight into the world of work and education.



A new Basketball Club is now up and running. It will meet every Monday evening with coaching from the Manchester Giants Basketball Club.

Connell 6th Form College give a presentation to Year 11 students about post-16 courses, opportunities and qualifications.

Year 11 students attend the Gateways project at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Great learning through politeness, honesty and hard work

Year 10 students visit Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester Cathedral and the Town Hall to source ideas and inspiration for their GCSE Art Portfolio.

A group of Year 7 students work with TfGM (Travel for Greater Manchester) and UTV Media on a publicity campaign to encourage responsible conduct on Metrolink trams.



STUDENT COUNCILS

The Academy has recently introduced a new structure of Student Councils where representatives will discuss issues around Academy life and give suggestions and ideas to Year Teams and the Senior Leadership Team. Each Year Group now has its own Year Council which will meet regularly to discuss issues around their particular Year Group as well as the Academy as a whole. The Year Council has a student representative from each Form who will take the views from his or her Form Group to the meeting and then report back afterwards. Congratulations to the following students who have been elected to their respective Year Councils.

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Remell Bell	Jack Gee	Owen Etches	Hannah Garland	Erinn Hughes
Jack Godfrey	Dominique Larkin	James Hesketh	Thomas Clarke	Chang Yang
Sam Welch	Abimbola Akinwande	Leighton Rhys-Jones	Molly Crompton	Matthew Grogan
Lily Climance	Lily-May Heeney	Noelly Nkombo	Bridget Joyce	Lucy Cryer
Abdulla Nasir	Aulon Behrami	Freya Holt	Paige Charlton	Reece Fletcher
Megan Walker	Owain Smith	Connor Nicholson	Elizabeth Le	Tia Nash
		Jamie Rawson	Basmah Ali	Thomas Benson
		Paige Leigh-Darraugh	Ellie Jones	Jeanette Cissay

The Academy Council is made up of a representative from each Year Council along with the Head Boy and the Head Girl. The Academy Council convenes after Year Councils have met to consider the issues which have been raised and to give feedback from their respective Year Groups.

Great learning through politeness, honesty and hard work

The Academy Council representatives stood for election and gave presentations at their Year Group Assembly in support of their nomination. Well done to all those who stood, the standard of presentation was excellent and your Year Teams were really proud of your efforts.

The Academy Council for this academic year is made up of Natasha Holmes, the Head Girl, Kai Wynne-Jones, the Head Boy, and Chang Yang (Year 11), Paige Charlton (Year 10), James Hesketh (Year 9), Jack Gee (Year 8) and Remell Bell (Year 7)



YEAR 11 CONSULTATION EVENING

The Academy would like to thank those parents who attended Year 11 Parent Teacher Evening last week. Altogether 139 students out of a total of 180 were represented by parents or carers on the night, a turn-out of 79%. Feedback would suggest that the evening was very useful for parents, students and staff.

Many parents filled in a questionnaire during the evening and we were particularly pleased that:

- 92% of them agreed that their child enjoys school and was happy at the Academy;
- 96% felt that their child was safe and well looked after;
- 92% felt that their child was making good progress; and that
- 92% felt that their child was taught well.

Great learning through politeness, honesty and hard work

In response to other questions, 92% of parents felt that behaviour at the Academy was good and 93% felt that they are now kept well informed; both of these figures represent significant increases on previous questionnaires with this year group.

Whilst the Academy is delighted with the 79% turn-out and appreciate the phone calls and emails from the parents who genuinely couldn't attend, we are concerned and disappointed that some of our students were not represented at such an important evening where progress, attainment, strengths and learning areas for development were discussed with subject teachers. Evidence clearly shows that students who are actively supported in their education by parents who attend such events as Parent Teacher Evenings do much better.

TAMESIDE HIGH SCHOOLS CHESS ASSOCIATION

Droylsden Academy is now a founder member of the Tameside High Schools Chess Association along with Alder Community High School, Audenshaw, Fairfield and West Hill. Other schools should also be joining the Association over the next half term.

A mini league between the competing schools will start straight after the half term break with Droylsden playing two matches against each of the other schools, one at home and one away. Each match will have six games, five will involve students from the competing schools and the sixth game will be between staff from the two schools. No pressure on Mr Cosgrove then who is our staff representative!

Meetings and matches will be held on Tuesday and Thursday each week. The Droylsden team would welcome your support and any student who would like to get involved should speak to Mr Cosgrove.

DROYLSDEN BOOK FAIR

The Scholastic Book Fair will be coming back to the Library on Monday 9th November for the week! There are over 200 titles for you to browse through and, with fantasy, thrillers, chick-lit, non-fiction, comedy and lots more starting from only £2.99 per title, there's sure to be a book for everyone to enjoy.

The Book Fair will be open each day at break, lunchtimes and after school. Students can also browse the Book Fair before school opens each morning, although they won't be able to purchase a book until later in the day.

If you can't make it to our Book Fair, you can purchase discounted Gift Vouchers at www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/parents. They're a great way to ensure you don't miss out and it means your child doesn't have to bring money into school as the vouchers will be sent direct to Mrs Godrich, the Librarian and Book Fair organiser, at the Academy.

Great learning through politeness, honesty and hard work

We want to try and hit our very challenging target of selling £400 of books. Remember that every book you buy helps to get **FREE BOOKS** for our school library! The more books bought; the more **FREE BOOKS** we get!

MESSAGES AND REMINDERS

There will be an Awards Evening for the “Class of 2015”, the Year 11 cohort who left last summer, on Tuesday 3rd November. Invitations will be sent out to students over the next few weeks.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The Academy will break up for the half term holiday on Friday 23rd October and re-open on Monday 2nd November at the usual time of 8.30am.

Year 7 Parent Teacher Evening will take place on Thursday 19th November. Further information will be sent out in the first week back after the half term holiday.