

15<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

In this final letter of this unprecedented academic year I want to thank you for your support and the warm welcome I have received as Principal of TQEA. I certainly feel that I have settled in now and am looking forward to realising our plans to ensure an extraordinary and safe education for all pupils at TQEA.

As you will be aware the government has stipulated that all pupils are due back in September and we have been hard at work with our Estates team to ensure that plans are in place for a safe return. I will share the finer details of those arrangements as soon as I am able to, along with our risk assessments.

In this letter I wish to appraise you of some of the key changes as we raise standards at TQEA and ensure a better educational experience for all students.

## Behaviour Policy

At TQEA we are committed to the belief that all children should be able to work in an environment in which they are not distracted or disrupted in their learning. Research clearly shows the detrimental effect poor behaviour and low level disruption has on the progress of pupils in academies. We are clear that students have one chance at school to receive the best education and, therefore, our newly reviewed behaviour policy reflects the high standards of conduct we expect in the classroom and around the academy to ensure everyone can learn and be perfectly safe.

We will not accept learning being disrupted and, therefore, we have implemented an inclusion room in the academy where students can reflect on their behaviour and repair after making unwise choices. In the inclusion room students will be receiving the same quality provision that they would in the classroom and, once they have reflected suitably on their decisions, will access lessons with their peers. The use of the inclusion room is clearly denoted in our behaviour policy.

In our behaviour policy you will note that we are moving towards an end of day detention system (called reflection) which meets government guidelines. We are very aware that students must reflect on their unwise choices as soon as possible after the event in order for them to learn and move forwards. In the past students have missed breaks, lunches and have accrued lots of detentions which they serve much later than the incident and which are fairly redundant if they are to learn and move forwards. Our behaviour policy will be of a “warm, strict” approach which has restorative justice at the heart of it. For that reason we are centralising our detentions and these will all take place on the day the incident occurred.

Government guidance is clear that academies have the right to issue same day detentions without notice to parents. Whilst we are going to issue same day detentions (reflections), my view is that it is important for us as part of our parental partnership, to inform parents/carers. Therefore, we are going to ask you to download an app called **Class Charts** to your phones and devices. This app will give you live information about rewards your child receives as well as providing you with a conduct log of behaviours. It is through this app that you will receive a notification that your child is being detained that evening for either an R30 (30 minute reflection at the end of the day), an R60 (60 minute

reflection at the end of the day) or R30 with a 60 minute SLT detention for serious poor conduct. It is important to note that students, for minor infringements of the behaviour policy, will always receive a warning before being issued an end of day reflection and will have an opportunity to modify their behaviour before being required to stay after 3:05pm. You will find details of how to access your account in **Class Charts** in an addendum to this letter (addendums have been sent via post to current Y7-Y10 families, Y6 families will receive theirs at the start of September).

It is important to stress that the vast majority of students will not be affected by these changes since they conduct themselves impeccably in lessons and around the academy. However, you will be supportive of the view that we must ensure teachers can teach, pupils can learn and that everyone in our community is safe. Furthermore, that detentions are about reflecting and repairing poor conduct so that students learn from the choices they make.

***The new behaviour policy can be viewed on our website.***

## **Uniform**

I wish to thank all the parents who have contacted me to support our stance in improving the standards of our uniform. I reiterate that from September all students must wear the uniform perfectly and without exception. This will raise aspiration, pride, standards and, ultimately, outcomes for students. As we have an academy “uniform” it must be noted that it is not interpretive. In particular, since it has been an issue in the past, please note that students will only be permitted to wear the “formal” shoes that are ticked in the uniform diagram on our website. We are not accepting pumps, plimsolls or trainer style footwear and I know that many retail outlets use the sharp practice of selling trainers and pumps and describing them as school shoes to encourage parents to purchase them. Please do not purchase “trainer style” footwear as it will not be acceptable in September. Once again, thank you for your co-operation.

No trainers of any make or material. Leather, or leather like, school sturdy shoes only.



Please ensure that in September students return without acrylic nails and no facial or body piercings other than the one stud/discreet ring permitted in each ear. Since students have been away from the academy for some time, can also ask that parents ensure that their child’s hair meets our policy for starting in September. This requires that your child’s hair is of one natural colour with no patterns or shapes cut into it and no shaved or number 1 cuts. Thank you for your support with this.

## **Attendance**

The government is clear that from September all students will be legally required to return to the academy full time. In line with this our full attendance policy will apply from September (please see our website to view this policy). If there is an issue around your child returning to the academy in September, please communicate with us as we are here to

support you. Our pastoral team is excellent and they will be completely willing to listen and to support you in ensuring your child returns to the academy.

We expect all students to have an attendance of a minimum 96% or above which equates to only four days away from the academy in a year. We follow up all absences with a phone call in the first instance although with further incidences of absence we may instigate attendance panel meetings and, if necessary, legal proceedings. Please note that we only accept a doctors' note or an appointment card/letter as proof of medical illness and will no longer accept prescriptions or copies of medication. You will appreciate that attendance in school plays a crucial role in the future success of your child and is vital for their well-being.

All that remains is for me to thank you for your support in these matters. We are committed to giving your child the very best education and one which they truly deserve. We have missed our pupils and can't wait to have them back fully from September.

Have a safe summer and I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Harding', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the bottom of the signature.

Mr N. Harding  
Principal  
The Queen Elizabeth Academy