

RTA

19 July 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

As always seems to be the case within The Ruth Gorse Academy, the summer term has been an incredibly busy one. This year has seen the academy grow from strength to strength culminating in an exceptionally pleasing Ofsted inspection last week. Due to the closeness to the end of the academic year, the actual report will be published by Ofsted in September. We will of course provide you with a copy once this has been published. The inspection provided a fantastic opportunity for an external unbiased analysis of the exceptional nature of both teaching staff and students within the academy. There were so many students involved in the process and all were an absolute credit to us; they were so proud to speak to the inspectors about 'their' school. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support in this process, the inspection team took the time to share some of the feedback from the parent free text response and I am really pleased that 96% of parents/carers would recommend the school to another parent.

At this time of year we look towards the end of term and the start of the new academic year. As we have done previously, it is our intention to finish slightly earlier on **Wednesday 26 July**. Students will be dismissed at **12.00 pm**, to begin their summer holidays. In September we will welcome a further 260 students into Year 7, leading to a school population of approximately 820 students. We are very much looking forward to them joining us and taking our older students through into their Key Stage 4 education.

As you are aware the academy believes that in order for a student to be successful they need an extensive support network to help them achieve their potential. The relationship between home and school is of paramount importance to the academy and it is with this in mind that I would like to clarify the most appropriate point of contact. Whilst we appreciate that the student planner is the main document that we use to communicate messages and record behaviour (positive and negative), we always place great value on holding timely conversations with parents to address concerns and discuss academic progress.

I would like to make a parental pledge to you. I guarantee that we, as an academy, will aim to respond to parent/carer phone calls within two working days. If this does not happen, then I will invite you into the academy for a formal meeting with the Vice Principal (Mr Mallinson) to address your concerns.

I would encourage you to read your child's planner daily and look at the school website for updates as a rich source of information. I would also like to take this opportunity to clarify your child's Head of Year for the next academic year.

Year 7 (and transition) - Miss Eyre
Year 8 - Mr Plummer
Year 9 - Miss Barker
Year 10 - Miss Loveday

Cont'd

The academic year will start on Thursday 7 September, with each year group joining at the following times:

Year 7: 8.20 am
Year 8 and 9: 11.00 am
Year 10: 12.00 pm

This allows students in the younger years to settle into school and develop their confidence as they move around the building, whilst also providing appropriate time for students to re-establish those important relationships with their form tutor, a key person in the academy.

Finally, it is with sadness that I let you know I have made the decision to step down from my Principal role from September. As some of you may be aware I am currently pregnant with my second child and so will be on maternity leave from November through to June. To remain as Principal during my absence would not be in the best interest of the academy and I am sure that you would understand that I would not wish to return to the pressures of such a role with a 6 month old and a 6 year old!

Mrs Cornfoot, currently Vice Principal, is moving to work across The GORSE Academies Trust in September as a Director of Teaching and so I will move to undertake the role of Vice Principal, leading on Professional Standards alongside Mr Mallinson, who will continue to lead on Student Standards.

In September we will be joined by Mr Liam Nolan as Principal. Mr Nolan has a vast range of experience, having led a number of schools in Birmingham which have been judged as Outstanding by Ofsted and I have every confidence that he will be an exceptional addition to the team and is the right person to take the academy forward as we move towards our next key challenge of securing exceptional outcomes for our students within their GCSEs.

The past three years as Principal have been such a privilege; to work with your children every day and watch them flourish and grow in every way is such an honour and whilst I will no longer lead that journey I still intend to play a significant role, alongside Mr Nolan and Mr Mallinson in shaping the future of the academy and consequently your children's future – just in a way that enables me to have my maternity leave and still be a mum!

I am sincerely grateful for all your support over the past three years and hope you have a fantastic summer break.

Yours sincerely



Rebekah Taylor
Principal