

16 February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

At the end of another exciting half term for Studio West I wanted to write to you to celebrate some of the fantastic progress our students are making and what we have been doing to enrich their school experience. There are also some information points to share about upcoming events, raising the bar on standards around school and in classrooms. Finally, I have included a reminder of our uniform standards.

Workshops, talks, visits and a show to remember

This letter would be far too lengthy if I tried to cover all the positive experiences this half term, so I have picked out just a few to give you an idea of the range of experiences delivered.

- **Domestic Violence support** workshop and training: Several female students have taken part in sessions to both raise awareness of domestic violence and deliver training so they can support other younger students who may witness this. The girls have showed fantastic commitment and maturity in addressing difficult issues.
- A couple of weeks ago we had a series of workshops and assemblies from David Allen on **developing self-confidence**. David is a highly skilled leadership speaker and coach he travels all around the world, he's been security for Nelson Mandela, delivered to the FBI and delivered very well received sessions to our students.
- Last weekend many of our Year 11 students were treated to an English & Maths **study residential** at the Grand Hotel, Gosforth Park. They enjoyed high level tutoring and particularly the full English breakfast on the Saturday morning!
- This week students with **exceptional attendance and attitude** have been rewarded with a trip to Gutterball Alley bowling. Well done to those involved. We are now working towards our next reward trip just before Easter. This will be a 'Big Camp' – an exciting event that is open to every Y7-10 student who displays 100% attendance and excellent attitude to learning.
- Last week saw the **amazing production of Bugsy Malone**. A fantastic effort by students and staff, it played to sold out audiences and was a great celebration of the performing arts here at Studio West. Thoughts have already turned to the next show, which I'm delighted to announce will be 'GREASE' – we can all look forward to singing along with that show.

What's on next half term?

In addition to the Big Camp mentioned above, we have several other events I'd like to draw your attention to:

- During the February half term break, some teachers and subject directors are offering **Year 11 sessions** to further support our students in the drive towards high grades in their upcoming examinations (details of the sessions on offer are attached to this email). Also attached to the email is the revision guide.
- Year 11's have their second set of **mock examinations** in the two/three weeks after the half term break. Following this, they will have another mock exam results event and results will be shared with parents.
- All Year 11 students will be attending a revision day at St James Park just before the Easter break.
- During March, Year 9 students will be asked to consider the courses they would like to take in Years 10 & 11. We will be combining the Year 9 Parents' Evening with an '**Options information Evening**', making it a crucial

event that every student and parents must attend. This will take place on Tuesday 12th March (a change from the original date as we are combining evenings to ease the burden on parents).

- We have planned a series of workshops and lessons in school to **address the dangers of misogynistic attitudes**. Everyone has a right to be and feel safe in society. Unacceptable attitudes to women must be stopped in our society and as a school we take this responsibility seriously. Through awareness raising and education we can have a positive impact on this issue.
- Our **after-school clubs** continue, and we would encourage all students to attend as much as possible. It is getting easier as the light is with us later after the end of the school day. The booklet of available clubs and what they offer is attached to this email.

Raising the bar

Despite the clear improvements in students' attitudes, attendance, punctuality and commitment to learning, there remain areas for development when it comes to standards. I know that parents will agree that they want to send their child to a school that has **high standards** as our role is not just to deliver students who have excellent exam results, but to develop them into good citizens with a respect for other people. Below are a few areas that I am not satisfied with some student's attitude towards, and therefore will be enforcing strongly from next half term:

- Swearing/Offensive language: **No swearing or offensive language of any kind is acceptable** in school and Studio West has a zero-tolerance approach to bad language.
- **Air pods (or similar devices)**: As these devices become more a part of our daily lives, we have seen an increase in their use around school. This is not acceptable and, along with mobile phone use, is not allowed. The consequence of a student being seen with these devices in (regardless of use) will be confiscation of the ear devices and the mobile phone. Whilst these will be returned from the school safe at 3pm, repeat offenders will face more serious consequences.
- **Coats**: We understand that in colder and wetter weather, students need to wear coats to school. Our expectation is that they do not wear them in the school buildings. When they arrive in a morning, they are politely asked to remove them once they are through the front entrance, but before the first internal door. Coats can be put on once students enter the 'pod' area near the dining hall if they need to at break or their lunchtime. Apart from this they should be carried not worn. Students will always be asked to remove their coats if they are breaking this rule and given at least one warning. Failure to respond in the right manner will result in a consequence.

Uniform Expectations

Finally, I am writing to you with a reminder of uniform expectations.

- A non-branded coloured shirt, appropriate to a students' year group, is to be worn. The logo has been removed from shirts to make them more affordable.
- A Studio West school blazer should be worn in school. If the student does not have one of these, we will provide them for students in the first instance. If we do this, we will send a communication home to say we have provided the blazer with the expectation that it will be worn to school after this. Failure to do so will result in a negative behaviour consequence.
- A branded jumper is not compulsory but is advised during colder months.
- Non-branded black skirt (of a reasonable length worn with non-see-through black tights), or black trousers are to be worn (these cannot be joggers, leggings or denim). These can be bought generically from retailers.
- Plain black sensible shoes must be worn.
- PE kit includes a branded polo shirt and 1/4 zip training top. Non-branded track pants/activewear leggings, training shorts and socks are to be worn. An updated PE Kit Policy is included as an attachment with this email.
- Stud earrings and a watch can be worn. Hair should be a natural colour.

We do realise that at this time when the cost of living has increased, a lot of families may not have the financial resources to comply with full uniform requirements. Therefore, if you need assistance in providing the approved uniform, please get in touch either by emailing: studiowest.admin@northernleaderstrust.org or by contacting Reception on 0191 4813710.

If you have any questions about the guidance, please do not hesitate to contact school. If you are unsure whether a piece of uniform is acceptable, please consult school before buying it.

Also, as a reminder, students are also required to bring equipment with them each day which includes in a school bag, pen and pencil, planner.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'C Knowles', written in a cursive style.

Mr C Knowles
Principal