



22 April 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Covid-19, new vehicle gates, Year 11 leaving date, Sixth Form Student Leadership Team Recruitment, Careers Hub Relaunch & Aspiration Ambassador Role, Personal Development Day next week, new clubs offer, parent governor vacancy, use of student planners

Welcome back to term 5 after what I hope was a restful Easter break. It has been an eventful first week so far with some of the headlines below:

Covid-19

Despite a delay over the Easter break, all students should have received their latest box of seven test kits. It is recommended that our testing days are Mondays and Thursdays. Test kits are available in school for any student who has not received them. Students should go to student reception for further details.

If any parents have any other concerns related to Covid-19 in school, please contact us at the Academy using the email address COVID@srpa.co.uk.

New vehicle gates

As you will be aware by now, our new gates are operational from this week. I appreciate that any change takes some getting used to. This project was approved by the DfE for a number of reasons:

1. Previous safety arrangements were wholly inadequate
2. SRPA is a rapidly growing and popular school and this shows no signs of slowing
3. We have one of the largest school sites in the county to keep safe and secure

For those parents/carers who work in secondary education, you will be aware that most schools now have similar fencing and vehicle gates and, certainly, all the schools I have ever led or been a senior leader at have similar arrangements. This design is intended to keep staff and students safe under existing safeguarding legislation and is not intended to stop parents accessing the school as needed. However, despite some criticism this week for instigating the project, just yesterday the new arrangements did their job as an individual exhibiting challenging behaviours was prevented from getting to main reception.

It is also public knowledge that one of our bus companies has let us down this week and does not wish to attend site to collect children. I am dealing with this as it is an unreasonable response from the company. I am in legal discussions as we speak about this issue and have

liaised with LCC bus inspectors in order to secure their view, as well as our own health and safety adviser. We have all appropriate risk assessments in place and I can confirm that our gates are wide enough for buses to get through despite some of the rumours I have heard this week. I will leave no stone unturned in trying to rectify this issue as soon as possible and will be in touch with affected parents once I have a resolution.

I remain steadfastly committed to keeping my students and my staff safe from speeding vehicles, careless parking and abusive visitors but we will not let parents down just because of this change. Parents can still access the front of school for collection of students, appointments and for disabled visitors by ringing the bell on the access control pad where reception staff will be happy to help and will let your vehicle through.

Year 11 leaving date

I am aware that parents are eager to find out our plans. I will be announcing our full plan for Year 11 leaving in my letter next week.

In the meantime, Year 11 intervention and support classes continue through this half term following the same plan you have already received.

Sixth Form Student Leadership Team Recruitment

The exciting process to find the students who will form our next student leadership team begins next week. Application forms and job descriptions will be shared on Monday with students and parents of Year 12 students. All applications are to be emailed to Mr Griffiths at JGriffiths@srpa.co.uk with the deadline being Tuesday 4 May. Good luck!

Careers Hub Relaunch & Aspiration Ambassador Role

On Wednesday 28 April we will be awarding our first ever Aspiration Ambassador Roles to our Year 7 cohort. Each of our Year 7 forms will have a representative. These are students who have demonstrated leadership qualities and always strive to be the best they can be. The deadline has been extended until Monday 26 April for any last minute applications.

Personal Development Day next week

For our penultimate Personal Development Day of this academic year, we are again focussing heavily on our students' happiness and wellbeing. Students will spend the majority of the day accessing a wide variety of sessions but with afternoon sessions with their R2L tutor group as part of our pastoral recovery plan.



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All year groups will have a one hour session learning about happiness and strategies to support a happier lifestyle as well as activities focussing on our SRPA Value of respect.

The large majority of the programme for Year 7 will involve the Snack Bar Idol competition. This is an enterprise competition where our students will create their own company developing their team working, creativity and innovation, whilst keeping an eye on the finance and numbers. The competition final will be beamed into all Year 7 classes and will be judged at the end of the day to crown our Snack Bar Idol champions for 2021.

Year 8 will be taking part in sessions focussing on the dangers of social media, an opportunity to develop a passion for art in our still life drawing taster session as well as opting into their own enrichment sessions which could be anything from dodgeball and benchball through to wellbeing and yoga.

Our Year 9 cohort will have a similar diet to Year 8, with them being able to opt into the enrichment activity they want to take part in, alongside sessions exploring cryptography and ciphers and healthy relationships.

Key stage 4 students will explore the aspect of freedom and liberty from our British Values programme. They will also look at how social media influences our decision making and evaluating readiness for parenthood and identifying positive parenting qualities.

Both Year 10 and Year 11 will have opportunities for some exercise with house competitions in rounders and dodgeball. Extra support and provision for any Year 11 students who need the opportunity for catch up with their GCSE evidence base will be supported in small groups to accelerate their progress.

Our Key Stage 5 students will be involved in their independent living skills day with a number of sessions for them to opt into. These range from basic car maintenance and handy home DIY skills to understanding what your payslip means to key culinary skills to allow you to be successful in the kitchen.

New clubs offer

We are now offering clubs in school from next Monday. These can be found under the **Our curriculum** tab under **Personal Development, Enrichment** on the website if your child wishes to sign up. Clubs will be held on separate days for each year group including sports clubs. These will take place on days when your child has PE anyway.



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“This is a calm, happy and caring school.”

Parent governor vacancy

As I mentioned in my last letter, a vacancy for a parent governor has arisen. As a result, I am eager to secure a new addition to the governing body on behalf of the Chair. Appointments are by application in the first instance. For further information and an application pack, please email my PA, Mrs Goffe, at agoffe@srpa.co.uk.

Use of student planners

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support in checking and signing planners as parents/carers on a weekly basis. As we continue with our curriculum recovery from the pandemic, effective use of the planner is an essential tool in re-establishing positive routines and giving students a holistic view of their learning. Tutors will continue to check planners on a weekly basis for signatures and effective usage as part of Ready to Learn routines. Please contact your son's/daughter's Head of House should you require any further information about this.

In signing off this week and as we enter the summer term, I am reminded of the words of American author Anthony J D'Angelo and his wonderful quote "Wherever you go, no matter what the weather, always bring your own sunshine."

I will certainly be looking to do this despite the continuing challenges of the pandemic and look forward to working in partnership with you all until the end of the academic year.

I will write again soon.

Yours faithfully



Mr D Hardy
Head Teacher



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