

28th August 2014

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Academy Principal

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Dear Parents/Carers

Re New Academic Year 2014/2015

I am writing to remind you of the start of term arrangements for the new academic year 2014/15 and to give you some general information.

Students in Years 7 and 8 and the Franklin Sixth Form will start at 8.20am on Thursday 4th September. Students in Years 9,10 and 11 will also start at 8.20am on Friday 5th September.

We are looking forward to welcoming all students back and particularly welcoming our new Year 7 students into our Academy family. We hope the partnership between all our families and the Brompton Academy will continue to strengthen and that we will work together positively for achieving excellent academic and personal outcomes for your children whatever their starting point.

Exam Results

The massive governmental changes to the exam system and the new accountability measures have put extensive pressures on this Academy and other schools locally and nationally. Students are no longer able to bank GCSE's in advance which means students are expected to take all their exams at the end of their courses. Previously students could work hard throughout the year and gain marks from continuous assessment, controlled assessment and coursework - this is now no longer an option for all students across the country. Clearly for students who find learning challenging or who have some special educational need this is going to be incredibly difficult. Future students will be unable to benefit from continuous assessment of any sort as government policy moves to all exams being linear and the grade a student gets will depend on how they do in the exam on the day.

Equally all students regardless of their ability will have to follow academic qualifications with fewer vocational courses due to government changes. BTEC qualifications, which the press have ridiculed as 'soft options' in the past, have been significantly strengthened and in our opinion are more difficult than GCSEs in some subjects.

All of these rapid changes have meant that the Academy has had to change its curriculum offer and adopt different approaches to teaching and learning. You will see more and more periodic testing of students and mock exams across all subjects. All students (regardless of their ability or educational need) will need to revise more extensively than ever before in order to achieve higher grades.

At GCSE and in light of the governmental changes outlined above the overall provisional headline measure of 5+ A*- C including English and Maths has dropped for the first time in ten years. This decline was also reflected across large numbers of high schools and academies in Medway and Kent. Notably our results in English significantly improved as did our results for our grammar band higher attaining students. As always we are never complacent and we will be striving to improve all subject areas for student outcomes.

Our congratulations go out to our sixth form students - their A level results showed great improvements over 2013 particularly in the the Sciences of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The Business Studies and ICT results were outstanding. Twenty one students gained University places this year and we wish them well for the future.

Behaviour / Uniform

Please can I remind all parents/carers and students that an absolute requirement for outstanding student progress relies on a climate where behaviour is also excellent. Students who break our code of conduct in school and on their way to and from school will find that strong sanctions are applied so that all students have the opportunity to learn in a positive, calm and happy environment.

The Academy is very strict on its uniform policy and we reserve the right to send students home to redress any uniform issues. The uniform requirements are clearly displayed on our website. Please be reminded that that no make up or jewellery (apart from a watch) our allowed, hair must be one ordinary colour and not shaved or shaped in particular fashion styles (e.g Joey Essex), no piercings are allowed etc. Shoes should be plain and not decorated with jewels or any bright colours etc. If you have any questions regarding uniform please contact your Head of Mini School or the Pastoral Manager.

Parent/ Carer Consultation Evenings

- 11 September - 5.30pm Year 11 Strategy Launch
- 16 October - 6pm Sixth Form Recruitment Evening
- 13 November - 4pm Year 7
- 11 December - 4pm Year 8
- 15 January - 4pm Year 11
- 29 January - 4pm Year 9
- 12 February - 4pm Year 10
- 5 March - 4pm Years, 11,12,13
- 23 April - 4pm Year 7

Please note our term dates are displayed on our website.

We look forward to seeing you all in the new academic year.

Best wishes to you and your family.

Judy Rider
Principal