

## Parent update 2/11/22

Dear parents/carers

We're delighted to have pupils back for the blustery start to autumn 2. They seem refreshed and happy and excited to learn and do well! Next week we'll share *Assessment Information Booklets* with you for our first termly test – a great opportunity to show what they know. In the meantime, we'd love to see you at the Forum tonight and if not, we'll be in touch with what we hope are concrete actions to continue to build our great school.

### 1. Parent Forum – tonight at 6pm – we would love to see you here!

Thanks to everyone who fed back on our survey. We have positives to share with our team, which is really important and of course very useful feedback to improve our school. We will be discussing actions and ideas for further improvement with our **Parent Forum today** 2nd November at **6pm** here on site, for about 45 mins. There will be tea, coffee, very keen staff and lovely parents – do come along – the last one was great!

We'll be discussing:

- Providing clear information about your child's progress and attainment
  - Ensuring lunch systems are managed effectively
  - Supporting homework effectively
  - Values & Character (PSHE, RSE) programme contents
  - Pastoral support available & developing discipline
  - Knowledge about our provision – clubs, trips, competitions & events
- ...and some other AOB (and anything else raised)

### 2. New procedure for reporting a child's absence from school

This half term we are updating the way parents report a child's absence from school. This follows feedback on our systems from parents/carers and our own reflection as staff. As before, we expect parents to contact the school **before 7:45am** if they are making the decision to keep their child at home.

**All absences should now be reported to the school using the online Pupil Absence Form** not via our phone line.

You can access the online form [here](#)

*...or use the link to the form on the homepage of the Ark Pioneer Academy website.*

The online form should be completed on each day of a child's absence.

The online form has several advantages over a phone-based system:

- It immediately creates a written record of the absence
- It requires less time for parents and school staff
- It allows multiple people at the school to immediately see reported absences

We strongly request all parents use this improved system. We appreciate that the online form is a new approach for parents, and so we will continue to also check the school's voicemail for reported absence this half term while we transition to the online form full time.

Parents are expected to communicate for each day of absence, even when absence occurs on consecutive days for the same reason. Parents may receive a follow up phone call from the attendance officer by 10am on the morning of absence. This is the case whether an absence form has been submitted or not. If we cannot contact parents regarding a child's absence and a form has not been submitted, the child is considered to be missing and this may trigger a referral to external agencies so we can ensure the child/families safety.

### 3. Peer Mentoring – opportunity for pupils in Y8, 9 & 10

**PEER MENTORING**  
Applications for Y8, 9 and Y10 mentors open November 2022

Start thinking about your **application form** and why *you* deserve to mentor a Y7 / Y8 pupil!

Peer Mentors meet with their mentees once a week and deliver a tailored programme focusing on varied areas of school life and wellbeing including exam stress, organisation, family life & friendships. Applications close 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022 – pupils should contact Mr Mogagi for more information.

#### 4. GCHQ National language competition - pupil opportunity for Y9

This week we launched a top secret competition with our Year 9 pupils – the GCHQ national language competition! GCHQ are giving Year 9 pupils across the UK a rare glimpse into their work as analysts, linguists, engineers, mathematicians, programmers and codebreakers to solve seemingly impossible problems. Next week, four pupils from each form group will be working as a team to bring their quick-thinking, code-cracking, puzzle-solving skills to solve language-based puzzles to score as many points as they can over the week!

#### 5. Work Experience – hosting Y10 pupils – contacts and help needed!

Work experience planning has started for our founding pupils as you know.

**Ms Riches** is our Work Experience Coordinator & **Mr Biswas**, Head of Year 10 will act as Work Experience Oversight

We would appreciate any contacts you have (including yourselves) that would like to host a pupil for a week in July (likely W/B 3<sup>rd</sup> July).

[Please complete the form here – we are extending the date to November 16<sup>th</sup> - we need your help to share any contacts](#)

*The form will take just 2 minutes to complete! Thanks to everyone who can help*

#### 6. Parent Webinar: Y9 Options update – all year 9 parents

For those who missed it, we attach the slides with information on the process for the year ahead including key dates. You can also watch the presentation here by following this link: <https://youtu.be/Ncu49R-ZtyI>

The key date for parent diaries is the GCSE Options Fair which all year 9 parents need to attend with their child. This is on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 4-6pm hosted by Heads of all subject departments and teachers of Key Stage 4. Tutors will meet parents before this date on Academic Review Days 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Jan (we'll be in touch regarding appointments this half term). Please do contact Mr McElwaine, [c.mcelwaine@arkpioneer.org](mailto:c.mcelwaine@arkpioneer.org) directly with any further questions.

Best wishes  
Ms Ryan