



## Joseph Leckie Academy

14<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are continuing to stay safe and well. I know there is a lot of uncertainty in relation to the new variant of coronavirus and this is causing a higher level of concern for us all. As an academy, we continue to take our responsibility seriously and aim to do all we can to prevent the spread of the virus among members of the academy community.

We are pleased that rates of infection in our area of Walsall appear to be below the national average at this time, although we take nothing for granted. We are also pleased that the take up of the vaccinations and booster jabs is going well and we would encourage this for everyone who is eligible.

My final letter of the term contains some very important information about our mass testing in January and the arrangements for the start of the new term. There are different arrangements for each year group, so I would ask that you read the information carefully and discuss it with your child/children, so that they are clear when they are expected to be in school and when they should be learning remotely.

I do not want my entire letter to be focused on Covid-19 as there is so much other news to share with you at this time. I am pleased that the news of our successful Ofsted report is now being shared in the wider media. It is a great reflection on all of the hard work and dedication of the staff in the school and, of course, on the effort, conduct and achievements of your children. The very positive report which states that students and staff are proud of their school, that school is calm and purposeful and that students value highly the extra opportunities they are given at school, has given everyone a boost and provides an ideal platform for us to continue our journey of improvement as we seek to become a truly world class academy. The best is definitely yet to come!

We have also celebrated the achievements of last year's Year 11 and 13 students at specially arranged celebration event at the Bescot Stadium in early December. The evening was very prestigious with subject achievement awards being given out for every subject offered by the academy. In addition to this, there were some major trophies awarded on the evening for all round high performance and achievement. These awards went to the following students:

- Year 11 – Achievement Award – Nasha Salahudden
- Year 13 – Achievement Award – Sagar Singh
- Year 11 – The Special Recognition Award – Jay Verma
- Year 13 - The Special Recognition Award – Ali Dabhad
- Year 11 – Principal's Award – Zahraa Kola
- Year 13 – Principal's Award – Akifah Zaman

### Joseph Leckie Academy

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Our special guest speaker was Rajeev Syal who works in London as a political journalist and editor. Throughout his career, Rajeev has worked at some of the largest national newspapers including The Times, The Sunday Times and The Telegraph. He is currently working for The Guardian newspaper. His speech was made all the more inspiring by the fact that Rajeev was an ex-Joseph Leckie Student. I wish to thank Rajeev personally for giving up his time to travel from London to attend our Celebration of Achievement Evening and for inspiring us with his words. We look forward to sharing further in the success of our students in younger year groups with another special awards evening planned for later in the academic year. The names of the winners above will be displayed on special boards in the Reception area of our academy along with the trophies they received.

Another significant and very successful event this term was the Lion Heart Challenge which was attended by over half of our students in Year 9. The event also took place at the Bescot Stadium and was run by The Lion Heart Challenge trust and supported by One Palfrey Big Local and the West Midlands Police. The day involved our students working in teams to come up with possible projects to support members of the local community. It was a very intense day with much hard work and interaction with the coaches who were there to support the teams in their decision-making and project planning. The day culminated in some amazing presentations and the awarding of prizes from the judging panel. The winning project will now go forward to receive funding and will become a reality so that our students can be directly involved in supporting and improving the lives of members of the local community.

At the end of term, we often have to sadly say farewell to some of our colleagues who are leaving for new challenges and opportunities. At the end of this term, we are saying goodbye to Mr Poppleton who has worked at Joseph Leckie for a number of years, supporting students through our mentoring programme. He is leaving to take up a post to become an assistant educational psychologist, something he has long had an ambition to do. Whilst we are very sad that he is leaving, we are delighted that he has been successful in his application and wish him all the very best for the future.

We are also saying goodbye to Mr Howells who has been a teacher and leader at Joseph Leckie for 35 years! That is an amazing record and achievement. Mr Howells has decided that now is the right time for him to retire from teaching. I know that Mr Howells has seen many changes and improvements in the academy over the years and he has consistently delivered outstanding teaching to his students and has supported many students as they have applied to study science at degree level and beyond. He will also be sadly missed and we wish him all the best for a long and happy retirement.

I know the whole academy community has been affected by the sudden passing of our friend and colleague, Mrs Small who died in November. Our students and staff have rallied around to support one another and we have taken the opportunity to raise money over the past few weeks for a charity which was close to Mrs Small's heart, The Follicular Lymphoma Trust. Once all donations have been received we will present a cheque to the charity to further support their work. Planning for a more permanent and fitting tribute to Mrs Small is already taking place and students will be asked to support with this.

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Joseph Leckie  
Academy

Full details regarding the start of term in January are enclosed and also available on the website <https://www.josephleckieacademy.co.uk/return4thjan> . Please ensure you familiarise yourself with the requirements for your child/children, to ensure a safe return to school for all students.

Finally, despite all of the challenges that we have faced as an academy this term, there has been so much success and positivity to celebrate once again. Each year group this week has had their own Awards Assembly where some of these achievements have been recognised. It is fantastic to see students receiving awards and to see how much this is recognised and valued by other students and the staff. I look forward to sharing that success further with you as parents and carers as we move into the new year.

I wish you a peaceful and relaxing Christmas break and look forward to working in partnership with you during 2022.

Yours faithfully,

Mr James Ludlow  
Principal

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