



Joseph Leckie Academy

11th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year and hope that this year is a healthy and happy one for you and your family.

Last week we welcomed back all our students and the vast majority took part in the lateral flow testing. This process, as on previous occasions, took a great deal of organisation and effort on behalf of the staff team here at Joseph Leckie Academy and I am very grateful to them for this. Given the increased number of positive cases we identified, it was certainly worth the effort and has undoubtedly played an important role in keeping everyone safe and limiting the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

We are really hoping that 2022 will be the year when we can return to all our usual events and activities including trips, visits, visiting speakers, and parental consultation evenings in person. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to do this at the moment as we prioritise the safety of the whole community and look to reduce the levels of transmission as much as possible.

In this, my first letter of the new term I wish to ask for your support and outline some areas of concern related to student conduct and standards where improvements are required from some students. I would like to start by stating that most of our students are meeting our expectations every single day and take great care and pride in their appearance and conduct, ensuring they are doing the right thing and are supporting everyone in the academy community.

Unfortunately, there are a few students who are not currently meeting the requirements and expectations and so I wanted to clarify things.

Face coverings – these must be worn in classrooms and corridors unless your child is exempt from wearing one on medical grounds. We expect our students to bring their own face coverings with them to the academy every day as the academy has only a limited number of replacement face coverings available.

Nose studs and earrings – students are allowed to wear a maximum of just one stud in each ear and are not permitted to wear hoops or drop earrings under any circumstances. This is for health and safety reasons. In addition, nose studs are not allowed in the academy. This has been a policy for many years. Whilst we have previously endeavoured to allow our

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Walstead Road West, Walsall, West Midlands WS5 4PG

Principal: Mr James Ludlow

Tel: 01922 721071 **Fax:** 01922 641497

email: postbox@josephleckieacademy.co.uk

web: www.josephleckieacademy.co.uk



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students time to correct their errors before issuing sanctions, we have now reached a point where our policy is very clear and students have been given repeated reminders. Any student who is wearing a nose stud or inappropriate earrings in the academy will be asked to remove them immediately and, from Monday 17th January onwards, will be issued with a 1 hour after school detention. In place of a nose stud, students may wear a plastic, invisible, retainer if they wish to.

Mobile phones – these are not allowed on the academy site and will be confiscated if a student is seen using their phone. All students are very aware of this rule and the sanctions that are in place if they are caught with their phone out. We have had a number of cases recently when phones have been seen in use during the school day and students have been reluctant to hand their phone over. This is clearly not acceptable. I am making you aware of a slight change to our sanctions for students who are caught using their mobile phone. The current sanction is for the phone to be confiscated and then returned to a member of the family who must come to the academy to collect it. The sanction now will be a 1 hour after school detention following which the phone will be returned to the student. Repeated breach of this academy rule will result in additional sanctions.

Lateness to the academy – every day there are a small, but significant number of students who arrive late to the academy and who therefore miss valuable form and lesson time. Assemblies and form time in the morning are important occasions where key messages and activities relating students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are delivered. Arriving late to the academy on a regular basis is treated as a serious breach of our code of conduct and represents a safeguarding concern. For cases of persistent lateness, our education welfare team will be involved in liaising with you as parents and carers and, where appropriate, with the behaviour and attendance team at the Local Authority. You will be notified whenever your child is late to the academy in the morning. In order to highlight the importance of good punctuality, from Monday 17th January, students will face a sanction of a 1-hour detention after school if they arrive at the academy after 8.40 am. This is an increase from the current 30-minute sanction.

I intend to write to you on a regular basis to update you on the progress with my requests. Over the coming weeks there will be other areas related to student standards that I wish to address. I will also be informing you of positive achievements and opportunities for our students and setting out our new academy vision and values as we enter a new era for the academy.

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You will be aware that, as an academy, we were recently graded Good in all areas, by Ofsted and we are very keen to build on this and become an Outstanding academy very soon. A big part of this is ensuring that we harness the strengths of our wider academy community and build strong and positive partnerships with you as parents and carers. I look forward to working closely with you to build on our recent success and to ensure that our standards and expectations are high. I am very pleased that the majority of our students contribute very positively to the academy and are meeting and exceeding expectations all of the time. This is very much appreciated and recognised. I would like to thank you, as parents and carers, for the support you have given us with this.

I am hoping that I can report that ALL students are meeting our expectations in my next letter.

A further letter will follow this week regarding our upcoming Parent Forum Meeting on Tuesday 18th January 2022. This will be held online and further details of how to get involved can be found on our website and will also be outlined in the letter that will follow. Booking is required and can be done via the website.

Once again, I wish you all the best for 2022 and look forward to working with you and your child(ren) over the coming months and years to ensure they achieve the success they deserve.

Yours faithfully,

Mr James Ludlow
Principal

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