



20th December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

I know that you will all be busy preparing for Christmas and all the fun and festivities that involves. I will be writing a much more celebratory message in our family bulletin, but I wanted to share with you some key messages shared with students in my assembly this week, so they are ready for the new year and a few reminders about agreed procedures, Apologies for the length but I felt it was better to get it all done in one go.

Uniform

The students at Ansford have fully embraced the higher expectations on uniform and wear it with pride. Many thanks for all your positive comments and supportive messages and it is very clear we have full parental support. We still have some issues however with nails and earrings that I want to give students the Christmas period to address.

Please can I ask parents to support us again by ensuring that any nail polish, gels or extensions and fake eyelashes are removed by the first day back and that students only have one stud earring per ear.

From January we will be fully enforcing this policy and students who arrive back to school wearing any of these will be required to remove them that day.

Equipment

Teachers have reported a slip in students having full equipment in lessons. This makes learning difficult when they are not fully prepared. Again, please can I ask parents to use the Christmas break to restock pencil cases.

A full list of required equipment and expected uniform is available through our school website.

Book in a Bag

As part of our drive to promote reading for pleasure in the school, as of January, we will expect all students to have a personal reading book in their school bag. This is intended to normalise reading as an everyday event but also allow teachers to call on students to read at any time; perhaps for an extension activity if they have completed all their work.

We have a fully stocked library open at lunchtimes, where students are always able to take out a book, but we would also encourage parents, family and friends to buy books as Christmas presents. A list of recommended reads for all year groups is available through the **Reading** section of our website.

Detentions

While the vast majority of students attend detentions when issued, there are still a few that do not. This is often due to students simply not checking Class Charts to see when one has been set. It has been suggested that we publish a list of detentions at the start of the day on a notice board, but students are not keen on this at all. That being the case, I am handing over full responsibility to students to check and attend their own detentions. In line with our policy, where they do not attend, they will be escalated to increased minutes, culminating in an after-school detention on a Wednesday.

Class Charts

Please can I ask that any parents still not using Class Charts on their phone, contact the school so we can help you set this up. This is an extremely useful tool for us all and I know that the vast majority of parents use it daily to monitor the rewards (and sanctions) being issued.

Please note, we have adjusted the points awarded for some behaviours on Class Charts. This means that more serious behaviour carries more behaviour points - a previous oversight we have fixed. This will allow us more easily to separate out students who are forgetting homework from those (very few) who are presenting more challenging behaviours.

Transport and access to the school

Pick up: Please can we remind parents that students should not be picked up from outside the school at the end of the day. With buses on site and students heading home, this presents a significant safety issue. Please arrange to collect your child from either the sports centre car park or the car park across the road at Caryford with whom we have an agreement.

Bus passes: We have had concerns raised from our bus companies that students are not carrying their passes and time is being wasted checking lists. Please can you confirm with you child that they have an up-to-date bus pass ready to show and contact the relevant company where a replacement is needed.

Medication in Schools

In line with our Safeguarding Policy, please be reminded that students are not allowed to carry or take any medication while on school grounds. If you require your child to have access to medication for an ongoing condition, please contact the admin team and we will work with you to agree how and when this will be issued by our staff. This includes all over the counter medication such as paracetamol.

Leadership of the Academy

As you will be aware, Mr Musson is stepping up to the role of Head of School in January 2025 and will be the primary point of contact with parents. I will be taking on the role of Executive Headteacher in school for three days a week, focusing on the long term strategic direction of the school and ensuring high standards and high ambition in all aspects of school life. Please note that I will still maintain legal authority and responsibility for the school and will continue to deal with matters of significant concern.

We will be staying with this model until the end of the academic year when we will again review. The long-term ambition for the academy is of course to have a full-time substantive Headteacher in post.

Mr Musson will be writing to you in the new term to introduce himself in his new role and I am sure you all wish him the very best of luck and success.

Finally, I hope you all have a fantastic Christmas. It has been an absolute pleasure to lead Ansford Academy for the past two terms and I very much look forward to continuing that journey in my slightly altered role. We will be holding further parent meetings going into the new year where parents can come and share their own ideas and ambitions for the school. We look forward to seeing you at these events.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Duncan Powell'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and 'P'.

Duncan Powell
Head Teacher Ansford Academy