



# Boroughbridge High School

24<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**For parents/carers of students in all year groups**

**Update on progress including how Ofsted priorities are being addressed**

Dear Parent/Carer,

**1. Engagement in the classroom and Behaviour for Learning**

We've continued to work at pace this half term, deepening our use of the Phases of Learning to continue to raise standards of behaviour and quality of learning in the classroom. We've had a number of staff CPD sessions where we've looked at elements to support this such as how we articulate the phases of learning to students, positive framing, our use of retrieval practice and increasing challenge.

We've also gained further ideas from our continued work with the Behaviour Hub. Along with an extensive programme of webinars, we have made a further visit to Dixons Trinity Academy




in Bradford and also to Carmel College in Darlington. Both of these schools are Outstanding. It was also interesting to see that both have developed provision similar to our Intervention and Reset rooms to ensure that students get the support that they need and that everyone in school has the opportunity to learn in a positive environment.

**What is the impact of our actions and how do we know?**

The positive impact of our focus on this as a whole school community has been evidenced externally through two local authority adviser visits in April.

In the first visit at the beginning of April, there was a focus on Behaviour and Attendance with the adviser commenting that 'there were positive relationships between staff and students' and 'students were clear that behaviour has improved in school this year, citing the use of Phases of Learning, less background talk in lessons, students attending detentions and a stricter approach to uniform.'

The visit took place during the Year 7 exams. The adviser remarked that 'The behaviour of Year 7 students, lining up and entering the hall for their exam was impressive, as were the standards of uniform on display' and a Year 8 assembly was observed, 'The behaviour of Year 8 students on entering assembly was impressive – they came in silently and displayed good standards of uniform.'

| <br><b>Whole class work</b><br>Teacher and Student Talk |   | <br><b>Group and pair work</b><br>Teacher and Student Talk |  | <br><b>Individual work</b><br>No talk                     |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Teachers  | Students  | Teachers  | Students   | Teachers  | Students  |
| Will explain and give instructions  | Listen and focus<br>Don't talk  | Will move around the room to check progress and give help if needed   | Focus on work<br>Ensure talk is about the activity being carried out<br>Listen to ideas from others                | Will move around the room to check progress and give help if needed or may, if appropriate, monitor the class from the front of the classroom | Focus on work and do not speak to others<br>Put up their hand if they need help<br>Do not let others see or copy their work<br>Keep their book or folder organised including sticking in sheets |
| Will select students to answer questions for recap and retrieval  | Answer questions when asked<br>Put up a hand if they want to ask a question or have something to contribute and wait for the teacher to ask them to speak |   | Help other students that they are working with<br>Keep their book or folder organised including sticking in sheets |   |   |
| Will ask students to put up a hand if they have an idea to share during discussion  | Don't shout out answers (even if their hand is raised)  |   |  |   |   |

Headteacher: Kathryn Stephenson, BA (Hons)

In the second visit there was a curriculum focus on Science with the adviser commenting positively on many aspects including that 'lessons observed were characterised by well engaged students, strong teacher subject knowledge, questioning and evidence of retrieval practice.'

This was substantiated by our own Quality Assurance with all members of teaching staff being observed across two weeks following the Easter break. One of the key characteristics observed across the school was the high quality of questioning with students responding to questions when asked and raising their hand if they had something to contribute. Alongside this, our constant monitoring of behaviour data shows that, in comparison to this time last year, the number of positive points has continued to increase significantly from the previous year and fixed term suspensions have halved by comparison.

*These strategies and the progress made address two of our Ofsted Areas for Improvement; 1. Some staff do not consistently manage pupils' behaviour well.' And '3. Some teachers do not ensure that all pupils are actively involved in lessons.'*

## **What are our next steps regarding engagement in the classroom and Behaviour for Learning?**

Not surprisingly, we will continue to embed and deepen our use of the Phases of Learning, using the Behaviour for Learning system when expectations are not met. Alongside this we are working on increasing the level of challenge in lessons and building resilience.

### **2. Attendance**

Attendance at school is important as research shows that it has a direct impact on student outcomes and therefore increases life chances. You will have seen in the media that attendance is not only a high priority at Boroughbridge High School but is also a national issue. Our mantra is that everyone is responsible for attendance and our focus on this has had a positive impact with our whole school attendance being 2% higher than this time last year but, at 89.3%, we are still below the national average of 91.2%.

We understand that there are many reasons why a child may find it difficult to attend school and that each child is different. Mr. Hepburn, our Attendance Officer, has now been in post for seven weeks and is working with students with low attendance and their families to support them in improving their attendance. By building relationships with students in school and visiting homes, he is already helping to engage and secure higher attendance for some students.

We have been accepted into a DfE Attendance Hub which will enable us to work with a school which is recognised to display best practice in strategies to increase attendance.

## **What are our next steps regarding attendance?**

We will continue to emphasise the importance of attendance with our students and Mr. Hepburn will continue to work with families and students who find it difficult to attend.

*This strategy and the progress made address one of our Ofsted Areas for Improvement; 2. Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough.'*

## **What are our priorities for the Summer Term?**

- As outlined above we will continue to reinforce our expectations and raise our standards. In lessons we will be working on increasing challenge and building resilience.
- We are currently developing clearer expectations around corridor behaviour. We've started with Be calm, Have consideration and Stay left and we will be building upon this.
- We are also reviewing our mobile phone policy. Further information will follow.

## **Other areas**

### **Rewards**

We've been working on rewards and, in particular, our end of year rewards trip. We're really proud of the progress that we've made as a whole school community and we wanted to find a way to combine the rewards trip with a recognition of the contribution that each member of our school community has made. So taking into consideration feedback from parents, carers and students from previous years and our local context, we have decided to go to the Great Yorkshire Show. This will enable us to make sure that we have sufficient tickets to ensure that everyone who has made a positive contribution is able to go, rather than having to select the students gaining highest points and, because it's a more local venue, the cost will be lower than in previous years. You'll receive a letter shortly after half term with further details. If your child's behaviour means that they will not have a place on the trip then we will contact you directly.

### **Appointments**

We've been interviewing over the last few weeks and will be welcoming new teachers in French, Science and Computer Science/ICT/Business Studies. We have further interviews to conduct in the coming weeks.

### **What can parents/carers do to support our progress?**

Your support has been critical in helping us to make progress. We'd appreciate your continued support with the following,

**After school detentions** These are an important part of our Behaviour for Learning Policy and the fact that we have support for the vast majority of our students to attend these detentions should they get them, actually means that the vast majority of them don't get them!

Regarding **Attendance**, please ensure that holidays are not booked during term time. Your child's absence will not be authorised as **a holiday is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance**. If the absence amounts to 10 sessions or more, a request to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice will be made. It is important to note that we maximise our time and maintain pace as we move towards the end of term by moving to our new timetable on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June. We have a Professional Development Day on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June when students do not attend school.

**Parent/Carer Evenings** We're already planning for our next academic year and, as usual, we would appreciate your feedback on whether to continue with online meetings or move back to face to face meetings. Please share your opinion on the Google Form which can be found at <https://forms.gle/hC5buYLyxqDA9Txi6>

**Please continue to let us know both when things are going well and when there are things that you feel could be improved.**

**On behalf of the Boroughbridge High School staff team, I hope that you and your family have a lovely Bank Holiday and Half term break. We look forward to welcoming students back to school on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June.**

Yours sincerely,

*K Stephenson*

Miss K. Stephenson  
Headteacher