September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer and Students,

We would like to welcome you back to school. I do hope that you all had a relaxing and enjoyable summer holiday.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a very special welcome to all parents/carers and students who are new to the school. We look forward to working in partnership with you over the coming years. A particular welcome to the new Year 7 cohort who have impressed us with their enthusiasm, engagement and excellent organisation during their first week at Brentside.

As usual at this time of year we need to share some important information with you:

1. Examination results

The results at both GCSE and A level were extremely good and I would like to commend the dedication of both students and staff. At both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 our results were up on the previous year’s outcomes. Some particular highlights:

- 66% of students achieving a good pass, grades 9-4 in both mathematics and English
- 50% of students achieving a strong pass, grades 9-5 in both mathematics and English
- 43% of students achieving the English Baccalaureate qualification (National average is 24%)
- 20% of students achieving at least one grade 9 (equivalent to an A**)
- Over 30% of students achieving at least one grade 8 or 9
- All students achieving at least five GCSE passes
- 98% of students achieving at least one grade 9-4. This is particularly pleasing because we are a fully comprehensive school serving our local community and taking the full range of ability with no selection of filtering
- 99.2% pass rate at A level

Once again early indicators suggest that, for the eighth year in a row, our progress measure at the end of Key Stage 4 based on GCSE outcomes is significantly better than nationally expected based on the progress made since students sat their Key Stage 2 SATs in Year 6.

Congratulations to all our students on another set of excellent results. We now wish our former Year 11 students, a majority of whom have returned to the Brentside Sixth Form, and our former Year 13 students, many who will shortly start university courses, every success in the future.

2. School Expansion

With another “Ten Form Entry” cohort into Year 7 we now have the larger year groups all the way up to Year 10 and the school roll is now close to 1600. To accommodate this increase and also to replace staff who left at the end of last term we welcome a number of new staff who you will get to know if they teach your child.

We welcome the following teachers this term:

Ms Al-Sikab (English), Ms Crampton (MFL), Ms Dunn (Art), Ms Fenner (RS), Ms H Gill (Mathematics), Ms J Gill (PE), Ms Hadjazi (Science), Ms Haria (English), Mr Hole (PE), Mr Jarman (Business Studies), Ms Lafkas (Geography), Ms Malhi (Mathematics), Ms Maurya (Science), Ms Mazhar (RS), Ms Melchizedek (Science), Ms Miah (English), Ms Miotello (Geography), Mr Reynolds (PE), Ms Richardson (English), Ms Rocque (Media Studies), Mr Scrimshaw (MFL), Ms Tantram (Drama) and Ms Twieg (Art)

We also welcome the following support staff this term:

Ms Alexander (Learning Support Assistant) and Mr Almonacid (Learning Support Assistant).
3. Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

The following message is a repeat of our position on these devices:

“Following advice from Ofsted, we have reviewed our school rules regarding mobile phones and electronic devices. We are aware that many of our students access social media sites and instant messaging services. Inappropriate use of social media can have an enormous impact on young people, not least on friendships and self-esteem. The London School of Economics carried out research at schools in Birmingham, London, Leicester and Manchester before and after mobile phone bans were introduced and found that test scores of students aged 16 improved by 6.4% in schools where mobile phones were banned. Other research sources suggest that banning mobile phones is equivalent to adding five days to the school year. Also the police have reported a rise in mobile phone thefts from young people as an increasing number are carrying expensive handsets.

On the basis of this research and in the interest of promoting the safety, well-being and academic achievement of our students, we changed the school rules regarding mobile phones and electronic devices. Mobile phones and electronic devices must not be seen on the school site. If a mobile phone or electronic device is seen on the school site, it will be confiscated and held until a parent/carer comes to collect it. Sixth form students will be given the privilege of using mobile phones and electronic devices for educational purposes in the common room and in lessons if the teacher gives them permission.

We understand that you may wish your child to have a phone for use off site before and after school and would recommend that you give them the most basic handset which will not be attractive to less honest people on the journey to and from school and is robust enough to be kept in their bag when on the school site. The school is not responsible for the loss or damage to any valuables. Please see the e-safety page on our school website for advice regarding social media and keeping your child safe online.

Please be aware that similar mobile phone bans are in place in most other Ealing high schools already.”

All students are reminded regularly of this ban by staff, supported by clear signage around the school building. If a student’s phone is seen in school then it will be confiscated, kept in the school safe, and a responsible adult will be asked to collect it. The only exception to this rule is that we do allow students to use mobile phones in the playground, not in the street, at the end of the school day.

4. Community Service

All students are aware that Brentside High School is a “no gum zone”! If a student is caught chewing gum then they will receive a one hour school detention. If any student is caught chewing gum a second time then they will be issued with Community Service. We will, of course, ensure that health and safety is taken into account when students undertake this Community Service. The reason for this is to ensure that the school no longer has to pay our premises management company to clear up used gum! We would prefer to spend the money on your education. The choice is easy; if you do not wish to carry out Community Service then do not chew gum in school!

5. Free School Meals

Are you missing out? Each child who is entitled to a free school meal has an allowance of approximately £450 each year. Our cashless catering system also ensures that no child is identified publicly as having a free school meal. Since the introduction of the “pupil premium” by the government, the school also receives additional funding (£935 per child) to give additional support to our students. If you think you are entitled to receive free school meals, you can apply online via the Ealing Council website here.

6. Student Appearance/School Uniform

We expect all our students to adhere strictly to our uniform regulations and dress code. I ask for your support in ensuring that students look smart at all times. In particular may I request:

- Shirts are tucked in at all times
- Ties are worn appropriately (including top buttons of shirts to be done up)
- Skirts should be knee length or longer and regulation style.
- Footwear should be black and polishable
- Hair should be a natural colour
- No makeup or nail varnish
- There should be no visible body piercings (one plain stud in each ear lobe is excepted)
Uniform code operates when travelling to and from school.

We do appreciate continuing parental support in ensuring the smart appearance of students throughout the school year. Please refer to the student planner if you require any further clarification.

7. Requests for Absence for Holidays

Absenteism due to holidays is a growing national problem but at Brentside we want to be different. Although it may be tempting to take holidays out of peak season, any time away from school has a detrimental effect on your child's attainment.

Therefore, any such requests will not be granted unless there is a compelling compassionate reason or really exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers are asked not to book holidays in term time. If students are taken away regardless, it will be marked as unauthorised absence and the Education Welfare Officer informed.

This is then likely to lead to a fine via a Fixed Penalty notification of up to £120! It is a legal obligation for schools to ensure the fines are implemented for this. You have been warned!

8. Attendance and Punctuality

The link between students’ full attendance and successful achievement, including good examination results, is proven. Please do all you can to ensure full attendance. In case of absence, please telephone the school office (020 8575 9162) on the morning of the first day and, if possible, try to estimate the expected duration of the absence. In addition, when your son/daughter returns to school, please provide a signed note confirming the reason for absence (the student planner can be used for this purpose).


The vast majority of our students display high standards of behaviour, politeness and good manners. Students and parents/carers should be aware that the school has a Behaviour Management Policy with clear procedures. The policy is as much about rewarding good behaviour as it is about sanctioning those who fail to meet our high standards. All students are made aware of our policy and for any parent who would like to see the policy it is available on the school website.

10. New Style Student Planners

Most of our students are hard-working and want to do well. However, a number of them have difficulty organising their work and their time, particularly when it comes to homework, and this is where the planners have a vital role to play. Each planner costs the school a considerable amount of money and all students are expected to use them appropriately and fully. In addition to the organisational benefits of the planner, it also contains useful information and provides a simple and effective channel for communication between home and school. I request that all parents/carers support both the school and their son/daughter by checking the planner regularly and signing in the space provided each week. Homework is further supported and communicated through Show My Homework which can be accessed via the school website or the app.

11. Valuables

Students are advised not to bring valuable items into school. The school will take no responsibility for the security of such items.

12. Traffic Congestion and Considerate Parking

A polite reminder from the school and the local police that you must not park at any time, even just to drop off children from the car, on the zig zags up to the zebra crossings or outside school gates. Many thanks for your consideration regarding this important health and safety issue. May I therefore ask all parents/carers that if you are visiting the school, or even just dropping off your child in the morning or picking them up in the afternoon, that you park with both consideration for others and legally. Traffic enforcement officers do operate in the area!

13. Communication with Staff

Please may I remind parents/carers that it is not usually possible to speak to members of staff during the school day without arranging a prior appointment. The teaching and management of students has to be our first priority during this time. However, please feel free to contact the school office to set up appointments and the appropriate member of staff will get back to you as soon as possible.
Finally I appreciate the significant amount of information contained in this letter. Many of you will have seen some of the issues addressed before. I make no apology for this as all items are important to us.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and wish you all the very best for the new academic year.

Yours faithfully

Arwel Jones
Headteacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday, 17 September 2019
Year 10 & Year 11 Settling in Evenings (17:00 - 18:00)

Thursday, 19 September 2019
Year 12 Parents’ Information Evening (16:30 – 18:00)

Wednesday, 25 September 2019
Early Closure for students (13:25)
Open Evening (17:30 – 20:30)

Thursday, 26 September 2019
School starts late at 09:45

Tuesday, 1 October 2019
Year 7 & Year 9 Settling in Evening (16:30 - 18:00)

Friday, 4 October 2019
Early Closure for students (13:25)

Monday, 21 October 2019 to Friday, 25 October 2019
Half Term Holiday

Monday, 28 October 2019
Staff Training Day

Tuesday, 12 November 2019
Early Closure for students (13:25)

Thursday, 14 November 2019
Sixth Form Open Evening (17:30 – 19:30)

Thursday, 21 November 2019
Target Setting Day

Friday, 22 November 2019
Applied Learning Day

Thursday, 28 November 2019
Year 7 Parents’ Evening (16:30 – 19:30)

Thursday, 5 December 2019
Year 10 Parents’ Evening (16:30 - 19:30)

Thursday, 19 December 2019
Last Day of Term (Early Closure 12:00 – 12:30)

Friday, 20 December to Friday, 3 January 2020
Christmas Holiday

Monday, 6 January 2020
Start of Term for all students (08:45)