



27 October 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: 'Spooky' (October 2023)

I know that students and staff have worked really hard through this long half term and all and are now ready for a well-earned break.

The school has continued to push and make gains for our young people in any way we can this half term. We currently have our first trip since Covid times back to China in progress and are about to take our first trip back to Uganda in half term. We have hosted a huge number of sporting fixtures at the school including local derbies with Bishop Ullathorne and Finham Park 2. The Russell Plester Derby was a particularly poignant event here.

Events around the world will continue to challenge us all as we see suffering happening wherever there is conflict. Finding our way through and out of conflict is not an easy thing to do. This is why the work of our restorative justice programmes is so important to always keep front and centre of all our pastoral work. After half term our restorative justice conference room will be opened, giving students the space to think and consider peace and reconciliation so that we can live with kindness and humility.

Healthy struggle is an important aspect of life and not something that should spook us. This is a concept that all schools and education providers are working within. The process of learning is a complicated one as everybody comes to that place from a different starting point and will progress at differing rates. Managing the stress and anxiety that this can bring is important. We are therefore launching our 'Class of 2024' intervention programmes which will include alterations to our mentor programmes; reviews following mock exams; and online evening meetings with parents to help equip them with the skills to support their children at home in their studies.

It can be a struggle getting up in the mornings when it's dark and damp and getting into school on time. We're therefore going to be celebrating students' ability to be disciplined (which is an act of learning rather than sanction) by launching our '100% attendance' club and 'C zero' club each week. Students get a fresh start every Monday and are challenged to get no consequences marks in the coming week and to come to school promptly every day. We will write to you over the coming days about this and update you on your child's attendance this term.

My colleagues rebuked me this week because I was so busy rushing through the day that I was forgetting to do the living within it. I had forgotten how important it was to speak with people at key points during the day to say hello and check-in on them. I hope that whatever your children get up to over half term, whether that's meeting friends, family or engaging in Halloween activities, they take time to get some rest so they are better equipped to deal with life's scary surprises, shocks, challenges and struggles.

Yours faithfully,

Mr C Bishop (Headteacher)

