

Year 7 Welcome Evening 2018

Address by Katherine Kantolinna Head of Year 7

The year 7 team is here to make sure that your child is happy at school and that they achieve their best. The average day ranges through sorting friendship upsets, to meetings with parents, via delivering year group assemblies, sending emails to staff about students, dropping in on lessons and supporting the 9 staff strong tutorship team.

I would like to run through a few things that came up last year **Attendance**. We know that attendance has a strong link to academic performance. If your child is off and attendance % dips, they will have an 'Attendance chat' with their tutor or with me. This is not being told off but is a way of monitoring absence and motivating students. It is also nice to get to know them

1. **Detentions**. Yes, even your little angel might get a detention. These might be short lunchtime ones (that always allow time for your child to eat) for example English reading record, or Friday afternoon Deputies Detentions for, for example, rough play or bad language. In the case of the latter one of us will phone home before to tell you the reason for it. It is great to get the support of parents for these and be reassured that there is no 'record' – it will not come up on police checks!
2. **Applying for term time holiday**. As you know there are now national sanctions for absence in term time. However the law does allow for approved absence in exceptional circumstances. To ensure this is the same standard, all applications for such leave are managed by the Head upon completion of the term time absence form on the website.
3. **Well being** Life can throw all sorts of things at you. Years of experience has meant that we know that families can face a lot of problems. From ill health to divorce, bereavement or redundancy we have seen it. If you are worried that something at home might be impacting upon your son or daughter do let us know. We have a range of things here that we can confidentially activate to keep school and home a happy safe place.
4. **Friendship** This is the really tricky bit of becoming the parents of a child at secondary isn't it? Traditionally as a teacher at a girl's school I think negotiating Brexit was easier than some of these, but we shouldn't underplay the fact that boys too find it hard. My colleague has a three day policy, where she offers to stand in if the girls aren't friends again soon. May I offer a tiny piece of advice? Don't be worried about not stepping in immediately and often they just need a listening ear. If things are still going please use the form tutor first.
5. **Communication** It's always great to hear from you and a quick phone call can often stave off a problem. Although I have time to do the Head of Year job, both Mrs Burke and I do teach every day and sometimes full days. Please do not expect an immediate response and we sometimes might have to send a 'holding email' if we are out of school or investigating the issue in hand. If your question concerns a subject area, it's always best to get in touch with the class teacher or Head of Department. These staff are listed on the websites. If you cannot work out who it is, then do contact Reception who can help you.
6. **Other issues** Lost property – anything labelled will wend its way back to Reception. Even if its initials in a sharpie it is better than nothing.. and yes even shoes. In the winter students need a proper coat to wear to and from school, no hoodies or denim jackets, they simply aren't warm enough

Finally I would like to invite you all to the family quiz being held here on the 12th October. It starts at 6.30 and lasts two hours so is great for little ones to come too. There are prizes and food and drink for sale and maybe you could team up with your son or daughter's new friend's parents to make a team? Tickets will be on sale at school in the week running up to it.