

27th February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Student Protests and Social Media**

I wanted to write to you as many of you will have seen the shocking images on the news and social media surrounding protests and may have concerns about your children.

I wish to confirm to you that our students, your children, made us exceptionally proud last week on their return from half term, their conduct was polite, calm and orderly. In fact, as an Academy, we focused on re-establishing routines and looking forward to the future with our Careers assemblies. We also conducted interviews for new staff, and a number of visitors to the academy commented on how welcoming and respectful our students are. I wanted to share this with you in case any of your children had any concerns about this week. We are also working hard on our latest production of Mary Poppins, which we are excited to bring to you in a few weeks' time.

We are proud of the high standards and expectations we have and we know that as parents you appreciate this too. The vast majority of our students meet these high standards on a daily basis, allowing all students and staff to get on with the main business of school; providing excellent education and learning opportunities for all.

Outwood Academy Valley is a community where all members have equal value and worth. We always encourage our students to contribute actively in shaping the educational experience through the Student Voice Group, led by our Student Prime Minister and his team of dedicated students who are always keen to ensure the voice of the child is heard. Any student in any classroom in any year, has a voice that should be heard and our Student Voice Programme facilitates this in our academy. Student Voice sits at the heart of our academy. One example of their work, following requests from our Girls Active Group, was the introduction of the black sweatshirt for PE. This was presented to SLT, following focus groups and research. This is a great example of democracy in action for the benefit of all.

It is important to note that if anyone did become involved in such protests, putting the safety of other students or staff at risk, or disrupting the learning in the academy, this would as always be treated with the utmost seriousness and would result in a suspension for students failing to comply with reasonable requests, as this ultimately could endanger others. Please support us and ensure that your children are aware in advance of this matter.

Social Media can be a great tool in working for the good of society; we are delighted that we are able to share so much good news about the achievements of our students both inside and out of the Academy. However, in the wrong hands it can be used to cause untold damage to the mental health of many vulnerable or impressionable people. Please speak with your children about responsible use of this communication tool and encourage them to come forward about issues that may arise through its misuse.

As always, if you do have any concerns or questions about your child's experience at the academy, please do get in touch through your child's Learning Manager in the first instance. Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours faithfully,



Mr D Cavill  
Principal



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