

6 October 2023

Dear families

The correlation between a child's attendance and the outcomes that they achieve in school are stark. For example, children who have an attendance of 95% or above are highly likely to achieve their target grades, whereas those with an attendance of 85% or less can expect to be up to two grades below their targets for all of their subjects. Simply put, children learn more and make better progress when they are in school.

Similarly, if time is lost in lessons due to children arriving late, then this also has a negative effect on their progress, which is why I have asked all children to **'be in lessons and be on time'**. As I am sure you can imagine, in a school in which nearly 800 children move rooms six times a day, lateness to lessons can be a problem. This is particularly true for pupils who struggle with their organisation and are unsure about what lesson they should be going to next.

This week we have introduced a simple solution to this which has neatly coincided with the relaunch of the house system. All children have been given a lanyard displaying their house colours, attached to which they all now have a mini version of their timetable.

Along with introducing travel time between lessons and a second 'deadline' bell, these have drastically reduced the time that pupils take to get to lessons, meaning more time spent in lesson, and fewer disruptions as late pupils arrive.



The response from pupils has been great, and I have had lots of very positive conversations with pupils who recognise that this is helping them and their friends to get to lesson on time.

### Year 7 Mini-Olympics

On Wednesday and Thursday, all Year 7 pupils were off timetable to take part in a fantastic Employability Project linking Mathematics and Sport, which allowed pupils to design their very own Mini-Olympics, in collaboration with Alfreton Leisure Centre who I would like to thank for hosting us all for a visit on Wednesday. Pupils worked in small groups within their houses and designed a proposal to a bank to obtain finance for their Mini-Olympics.

Amber were the house voted by staff for the best teamwork, showing excellent collaboration skills and some superb pupil leadership. Well done Amber!

The six best groups from each house then presented to the full year group as well as external judges. There were some wonderful ideas and lots of thought and hard work had gone into their pitches. I was particularly impressed with the confidence all pupils displayed when presenting to the year group – which is even more impressive when you remember that it only their twenty second day in the academy! Judging was exceptionally tough as all teams presented detailed and imaginative proposals, but Trent were the house who narrowly stole the crown, as their use of maths was very strong, and they had also considered the sustainability of their project by eliminating waste.

## Macmillan Bake-Off

What an incredible selection of cakes, biscuits and treats baked at home and bought in on Monday morning for our house competition, in support of Macmillan. These were sold at brunch and lunchtime, and we raised an amazing £610. Thank you and well done to every pupil who took the time to bake for this most worthy of causes. Winners will be announced on Monday.



## Fresh Fruit Friday

The huge sugar rush from our cake sale on Monday didn't go unnoticed! We can all work better when we have plenty of energy. Therefore, to deliver this in a slightly healthier way we have a new initiative in school to help support healthy eating and wellbeing. From 8am every Friday, fresh fruit will be available for free in the dining hall for all pupils who would like it.



## Year 11 Revision and Sixth Form Open Evening

On Thursday 5 October we hosted our Year 11 Revision evening and Sixth Form Open Evening. During the school day we discussed with Year 11 students the skillset required to be successful, followed by an afterschool revision session which provided further information on revision techniques and best practice.

Families then joined students to attend a presentation and discussion, where we shared important information about how students can be supported throughout this crucial time, followed by subject displays for A-Level and BTEC courses which are on offer for enrolment in September 2024, which have the potential to open doors in a variety of career paths. All courses include the opportunity for employer engagement which allow students to apply their learning in a real-world context.

### **Early finish for staff training – Monday 16 October, 2pm**

Please be reminded that on Monday 16 October, the academy will close at **2pm to all pupils** due to staff training. Early buses, including the Wessington bus, have been arranged. If you would prefer your child to remain at the academy until the usual finish time a supervised area will be provided. Please email [info@davidnieper.academy](mailto:info@davidnieper.academy) if your child will remain in the academy.

### **Parent Forum – Thursday 19 October, 4.30-6pm (new date)**

Our proposed Parent Forum scheduled for Wednesday 4 October, has been re-arranged and will now take place on Thursday 19 October. If you would like to join us to discuss any of the agenda items below, please email [mhackett@davidnieper.academy](mailto:mhackett@davidnieper.academy).

- What funding is the school able to access to support my child?
- How are passports reviewed and will parents be involved in this?
- What is the role of the BASE and when can children access it?
- How will my child be supported to increase their reading age?
- What support will my child receive in completing their homework?
- How can the academy encourage my child to get involved in more extra-curricular activities?
- How will the school support my child as they move to sixth form or college?

### **Dates for the diary**

Wednesday 11 & Thursday 12 October	Year 8 Theatre residential trip, London
Monday 16 October	Early finish for pupils at 2pm
Tuesday 17 October	Year 8 Fashion Challenge
Thursday 19 October	Parent Forum
30 October-3 November	Half-term holidays
Friday 22 December	Last day of term, 2pm pupil finish

If we can help or support in any way, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. Please email [info@davidnieper.academy](mailto:info@davidnieper.academy) and a member of staff will be in touch.

Have a great weekend.

Yours faithfully



Mr R White  
Head of School