

August 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are well. We've had a wonderful first year in which much has been achieved and all at the Academy would like to thank you for helping your child adapt to these changes. The most recent whole school student voice survey highlighted the benefits of our collective efforts with students reporting they feel safer and learn more in their lessons. Staff have been busy during the holiday period, reflecting on what has been done and the next steps as we continue striving for improvement. On that basis, we would like to take this opportunity to outline some changes that we will be implementing from September. We would like to emphasise that the decisions taken are with the long-term health and happiness of students in mind and based upon their feedback of how to improve our culture further.

Healthy Eating

Diet and nutrition are key factors in the health and growth of a child. A child's quality of diet can have a big impact on their growth rate, teeth, organ function, brain development, as well as their behavioural patterns. Unfortunately, the attractiveness and easy access to unhealthy food and drinks contributes heavily to the damage on their health and their achievement in school. For example, family size crisp packets, multiple sweet packs, large cans of energy drinks, bottles of fizzy soft drinks and lolly sticks, which are high in sugar and artificial additives, are a regular feature of school life in the UK.

Therefore, starting September DBA will be a '**Healthy School**'. This means that students will not be allowed to bring sweets (including chewing gum), crisps, or drinks (fizzy or otherwise) containing sugar or caffeine into school. To be fair to students, we will introduce this new expectation in phases which will begin on their return.

Week beginning 6 th September	Inform students, explain the reasons & new expectation.
Week beginning 13 th September	Items will be confiscated & returned at the end of the day.
Week beginning 20 th September	In addition to confiscation, a correction will be given.
Week beginning 27 th September	Items will be confiscated and disposed of. Corrections will be given

To help the environment, we would be grateful if you provided your child with a large, clear, refillable water bottle they can fill at home and bring to school.

Phones, Headphones & Smart Watches

Over the past two years, various research papers have identified technology as a regular source of disruption that reduces the learning that occurs in schools and often negatively impacts the wellbeing of children of all ages. There are well established links with cyberbullying, behaviour issues that stem from interaction on social media and exposure to inappropriate content online. However, we do also recognise that mobile phones are an essential safeguarding tool that provide families the means to adjust plans for collection and immediately communicate concerns or reassurance going to and from school.

We would like to remind families that all phones and headphones should be switched off and placed in school bags before entering the school gates. The expectation is that these items should be '**Not Seen or Heard**' during the school day. This expectation exists from '**Gate to Gate**'. Smart watches (e.g., Apple watches) are also not permitted. Therefore, if these **electronic devices** are seen or heard, the following actions apply:

- the item/items will be **confiscated** and securely stored
- the student will receive a **correction**
- the item/items will be **returned** to the student after their correction at the end of the same day

For non-emergencies, parents or carers wishing to contact their child throughout the school day should contact their head of year via email. All key contact email addresses are available on the contacts page of the school website at <https://www.dixonsba.com/contact> . In cases of emergency, please call reception and your child will be located immediately.

Parents/carers can support us by actively discouraging direct contact with their child during the school day. If a child wishes to speak to a parent or carer, they should approach a member of staff and request to make a discrete phone call in an office.



Uniform

At DBA, we believe that uniform is an important social equaliser that ensures we build a culture in which everyone feels accepted. Furthermore, our high expectations surrounding uniform and appearance are central to our ability to build a professional mindset. This promotes the sense of a shared purpose, our mountain climb to university. These expectations are adhered to by all and provide students with a sense of belonging and pride. Nonetheless, we wish to continue to allow some choice within very clear boundaries.

Ties, Bags and Jewellery

- For September, students can choose between a clip on or a traditional tie. We feel this is a small but important adjustment that respects the growing independence of our students and is something they have requested.
- As we believe in purpose over power, school bags will no longer have to be black. Students can bring a bag of any colour to school. However, we do insist that a student's bag is large enough to fit an A4 lever arch file, their planner, pencil case and anything else they may require. Smaller bags that cannot contain these items are not appropriate, and students will be given a correction and be expected to borrow a temporary bag from us until the bag is replaced.
- As of September, any jewellery worn by a student that does not comply with our expectations will be confiscated, stored securely and be available for collection after completing their correction at the end of the day.

Beta

From September, Isolation will be referred to as Beta. In the mountain climbing community, the 'beta' refers to the information given by more experienced climbers on how to climb a mountain successfully. We feel that this term more adequately reflects our philosophy and our desire for all our students to feel supported, despite the choices they might have made. Students will be supported in Beta if they have shown they are not ready to learn and will be provided with learning resources and time to reflect on their choices. Parents/ carers will be notified upon being registered in Beta.

Corrections

Now that students have had a full year to become accustomed to the expectations surrounding our learning habits and the concept of same day corrections, we will now move to the next phase of implementing the Dixon's behaviour system to further reduce distractions occurring that are harmful to your child's education. The aim is to resolve issues and provide students with a solid foundation for success the following day.

From September, corrections will be served concurrently. It is no longer appropriate or necessary for a student who receives a single correction to serve the same half hour correction as a student who has received 3 corrections in a day. Therefore, each correction will have a separate half hour consequence which will be served on the same day. Therefore, the following will apply.

Sanction	Time
1 Correction	30-minute correction on the same day
2 Corrections	60-minute correction on the same day
3 Corrections	90-minute correction on the same day
4 Corrections	90-minute correction on the same day
	BETA* the following day.

Any students that choose not to attend their correction will be placed in Beta the following day.

For any essential appointments that have been arranged to take place immediately after school, we ask parents/carers to:

- make a note of the appointment in the planner of their child indicating the time the appointment is arranged for
- inform the Head of Year via email of any appointments that would clash with a correction

This will allow the Head of Year to rearrange the correction for the following school day. Without this communication, if the student is not present for their correction, it will be presumed their failure to attend is their own choice.



If you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, please feel free to get in touch via info@dixonsba.com and we would be happy to get in touch as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Nick Hughes
Vice Principal
Student Culture