July 2019

Dear Families,

*Time and tide wait for not one of us*...and incredibly, we are heading towards the end of another busy, and once again, hugely successful year. The examination season for Year 11 and 13 has drawn to a close. Once more I am able to report to you that our senior students’ behaviour, focus and diligence throughout, was, without exception, very admirable.

It is a perfect indicator of George Dixon Academy’s continued progress that we are again oversubscribed for our Year 7 places with well over 180 new families on our academy roll. Of course, we always recognise that there is much still to do at GDA but after a decade of working closely with you, I remain passionate about striving to improve in every aspect of supporting you, to support our children.

We must never become complacent and demand ever higher standards of all.

Indeed, at the Academy gate in the morning I am noticing that the vast majority of our students are fully equipped, but not all are. Please could I restate my expectation that every child carries the following every day:

- A academy bag
- A reading book for all years 7-10 to be carried each day
- A pencil case with pen/pencil/ruler as a minimum and preferably colours and a calculator.

There is always the continued expectation that all students are in full academy uniform, every day.
In terms of attendance and punctuality, please can you do everything possible to ensure your child is onsite by 8.30am (our Late Gate system starts by 0840) and has attendance at 97% or above as lost learning due to lateness or absence will harm your child’s progress.

As you know, we try our hardest to keep you informed about what is going on in the Academy. However, sending out paper letters is not always reliable due to them being mislaid, crumpled or lost to the depths of your child’s bag! We are also increasingly aware of the environmental impact associated with printing and photocopying hundreds of letters every week. It is also costly and rather than the money being spent on paper and ink, we know that the money would be better spent on your child’s learning.

To help improve communication we have signed up to a service called SchoolPing- a free app which sends instant messages straight to your smartphone, wherever you are. If you do not have access to a smartphone, you can also receive messages via email or by logging in to your account on the web. Whether you’re at work, at home or on the go, all you need is an internet connection to stay up to date with all of the Academy’s latest news.

At this time of year, as is quite usual, we say farewell to a small number of colleagues (the words of Winnie The Pooh come to mind..."How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard...") and a great big hello ("...welcome...Come freely. Go safely; and leave something of the happiness you bring."-Bram Stoker, Dracula) to those joining us in September.

We wish all leavers much good fortune, from all members of the George Dixon family. Importantly, we shall begin the academic year 2019-20, fully staffed, energy levels recharged and raring to go.

Below, I provide you with some key dates. Further information can be found on the academy website.

Key Dates

- End of term visits – Thursday 18th July 0730 to 1830 (normal academy day for students not taking part). The term will draw to a close.
- Summer Fayre- Tuesday 16th July (1130 onwards).
- Sports Day – Wednesday 17th July.
- GCSE Results Day – Thursday 22nd August – results available from 0800.
- Monday 2nd September 2019 – Whole Staff Professional Development Day.
• The new term will begin on Tuesday 3rd September 2019 for Years 7, 11, 12 and 13.
• All students (Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13) are to attend the Academy on Wednesday 4th September 2019.

Lastly, I do hope you and your families have a safe and enjoyable summer and this gloriously sunny weather continues to shine on our children for the entirety of the summer break.

I look forward to seeing you all in the new academic year.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Anthony Hamilton
Headmaster
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The benefits of using SchoolPing

**Live updates**
Receive school messages in real-time, read them at your convenience.

**Free to download**
SchoolPing is free for parents to use and is available on iOS and Android.

**School events**
Stay in the loop with an integrated calendar and book Parents' Evenings directly within SchoolPing.

**Any device**
You choose how to view your messages, whether it’s on your phone, tablet or computer.

**Media rich**
See those special school moments with photos, videos, sound clips and documents, all viewable within the app.

**Environmentally Friendly**
No more searching through bags for letters home, SchoolPing reduces the use of paper, saving trees!
Getting Started with SchoolPing

Download SchoolPing

Your username and password will be provided to you by your child's school, or provided to you in the form of an email. The app is available for Android and iPhone and can be downloaded by searching for SchoolPing in the Play Store or App Store. Once this has downloaded, choose the relevant School name from the list. If you would rather log in through the web, you can ask the school for the web address.

Log in to SchoolPing

Type in your username and password and click on "Log in". You will then be taken through the set up steps. If you have been sent an email, you will be taken through these steps after clicking on "Start using SchoolPing"

After setting your password you will be asked to enter your e-mail address. Keep in mind that your email address can only be used to verify one account.

Verify your email address

The final step is to verify your email address. This can be done by clicking on the link which will be emailed to you. You will be asked to enter your password and then click "verify email".

We hope you enjoy using SchoolPing!