

December 2018



Dear Parent(s) / Carer(s)

With the end of term rapidly approaching, it is time to reflect on what has been a successful term for the Academy.

In September we had our Open Morning, which was very well attended and the initial signs show that Bower Park is a very popular choice for parents for next year. Credit needs to go to the staff and students who did a fantastic job showing prospective parents all the qualities of the school.

In October, Year 11 took their first pre-public exams of the year. These are important as they give us an indication of what will be achieved next summer. Their behaviour and attitude towards the exams was excellent and the early signs show that we can look forward to significantly better results in 2019. It was clear that students had revised for the exams and tried really hard in each of their exams. It is important that they continue to work hard from now until next summer.

We have had lots of trips throughout this term, giving students opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. These include trips to mid-Wales with Year 8, students travelling to the French market and 24 students travelling to New York on a Performing Arts trip. These are just a few examples of the wide range of opportunities we have offered students this term. Thank you to the staff who have given up their time to organise these experiences for our students.

Enterprise Day

On Tuesday 4th December, the Academy held its annual enterprise day. The Academy's aim is to help students develop the key skills and attributes that will help them succeed in their adult lives; it's what employers, universities and colleges are looking for in addition to qualifications (which are vital). LORIC is the acronym that defines these skills – Leadership, Organisation, Resilience, Initiative and Communication. To be successful during enterprise day, students have to be able to use their LORIC skills effectively.

The theme for this year was to create a new board game. Students worked in groups of five or six all day in their Learning Families creating the game. They had to:-

- Build a prototype of the game.
- Create an instruction leaflet.
- Design and make the packaging for the game.
- Design a range of marketing tools, including a TV advertisement, posters and social media messages.

Each group then had to display their ideas in a presentation, in no more than two minutes. Initially, groups were competing against each other within each Learning Family . Once a winning group was decided, the winners from each Learning Family went head-to-head with the other forms in their House. This meant that students were presenting their ideas to their whole House. Independent judges watched and listened to the presentations, and scored each group out of one hundred marks. The quality of the presentations was amazing, and the diversity of ideas and the creativity shown unbelievable. The winning teams from each House were as follows:-

- King: K8 (Ms Savage)
- Moore: M8 (Mr Punungwe)
- Edison: E9 (Mr Nadesan)
- Rowling: R6 (Mrs Dawe)

The winning teams will go on a trip to Escape HQ in Brentwood early next term.

Well done to all students who took part – I was very proud of the way you worked together, the quality of your presentations and how creative you were. Thank you to our judges: Mrs Brand, Mr Braithwaite, Mrs Lincoln, Mrs Mann, Mrs Grix, Mrs Holgate, Mr Smith (governor) and Mrs Grainger. They had a really tough job on their hands deciding between such brilliant presentations. Thank you to Mrs Stannard, Mrs Yates and Mr Wookey, who organised the day. Thank you also to Paragon Learning (Tracy Urch and Kevin Walsh), whose resources, ideas and creativity made the day possible and a huge success.

Lockers

The lockers have arrived and the students who booked them have now got a locker. Given they arrived late in the term, we will extend the charging period until Easter. There are still lockers spare. If you would like your child to have a locker, they need to return a letter (available from the school office) with their £5 charge and bring their own padlock. There is information on the website (under Principal's Blog) about the type of padlock to purchase.

End-of-Term Arrangements

School finishes on Wednesday 19 December. This will also be our Christmas Jumper Day, when we will be raising money for Save the Children. Students can wear jeans and a jumper. If not, they need to be in full uniform. The school rules around jewellery, make-up, etc. still apply on this day. Students need to bring £1 to school on that day. There will be an early finish, with students being dismissed at 12.30 p.m.

School will reopen for students on Tuesday 8 January 2019 at the usual time.

Academy Expectations

Thank you to parents for your continued support around uniform. Can I remind parents that students can only wear trainers if there is a medical note to explain why. Otherwise, we will supply a pair of shoes. A reminder that no jewellery is permitted, except for a wristwatch, and that we do not allow any false nails, nail varnish or false eyelashes.

National Kidney Federation

A group of Year 11 students decided to raise money for charity to support a fellow student in their year group and his family. They requested that the school fundraise for the National Kidney Federation (NKF) which is a charity run for kidney patients by kidney patients. It was decided to hold a 'Wear Something Purple' day on Friday 23rd November. The event was hugely successful and over £600 was raised. Many students paid £1 to wear purple – hats, jewellery, nails, hair, etc. Some paid a great deal more. This was a real sign of the strong community cohesion we have at Bower Park. Thank you to everyone who supported the NKF cause.

Congratulations and thanks go to Megan Smith, Rhiannon Smith, Macy Steans and Conor Pocock who led and organised the day. They have each earned a Principal's Award for their endeavours.

Careers Fair

On Friday 7 December, the Academy held a Careers Fair where local employers, colleges and universities came to the school to provide information for students. Every student in the Academy had the opportunity to go into the Careers Fair and find out information pertinent to when they leave school. The students were absolutely amazing and we are very grateful to all the providers, some of whom were ex-students of Bower Park. Many thanks to Mrs Porter who organised the day so effectively.

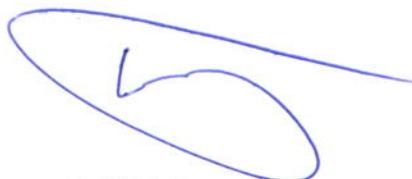
Disco for Years 7-9

Also on Friday 7 December, we held a Year 7-9 Disco, which again was very well attended. The event was organised by Vicky Gill, who is Deputy Head Girl. She has been fundraising for her trip to the Scouting Jamboree in the United States and managed to raise over £500 to support this excellent trip. Attending the Jamboree is very prestigious and we are very proud that Vicky has been selected to go. Thank you to all the staff and parents who came to help.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a relaxing Christmas holiday.

A special thank you to the staff at Bower Park who continue to work very hard. Our theme this year is 'Striving for Excellence' and I believe they are fulfilling that expectation.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S W McLaughlin', enclosed within a blue oval shape.

S W McLaughlin
Principal