

4<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### **Autumn Term 2023**

Dear Parent/ Carer,

I hope you all had a wonderful family summer holiday and are as excited as we all are for the start of the new academic year. The summer has been very busy at Blacon High School, and we have been working tirelessly on the school environment to ensure that we are ready for the return of all of our learners.

We have paid particular attention to our learning lodges and are delighted with how they are now looking. We have also spent time reviewing our lunchtime food offer to ensure that all students have the opportunity to eat from a range of options and in different venues across school. All of this detail will be shared with our students in assemblies on their first day back with us.

As you are all aware, we are continually striving to raise standards of learning, engagement and student conduct across school and I am happy to inform you of some amendments we are making to some of our policies. These amendments aim to improve positive engagement with clear sanctions in place if students fail to meet expectations.

Please see below some changes and reminders about our uniform policy:

**Black trainers** – we have changed our policy to allow black trainers. As previously communicated with parents and all students before summer, these trainers must be fully black, including soles, heels, tongues and laces. Any colour of any kind, no matter how small will mean the trainers are not allowed. As with any other issues with uniform, students will be placed in isolation if the issue cannot be resolved. If you require any assistance or would like to speak about uniform, please speak to a member of our Family Support or Pastoral Support teams.

**Piercings** – In addition to one plain stud earring, following student voice, we have decided that we will allow students to wear one plain silver or gold stud nose piercing (no greater than 2mm in size).

**Skirts** – No change has taken place to our policy on skirts, but a reminder that school skirts should be worn no shorter than just above the knee. We are aware that many retailers sell ‘school skirts’ that school policy deem as ‘too short’, so we recommend that you use our uniform provider, Uniformity. However, we do understand that it is often cheaper to purchase skirts from shops such as Sainsbury’s and Marks and Spencer but skirts should still be just above the knee length.

**Nails** – We have considered our policy on nails and, after much student and parent voice, have decided that we will allow natural coloured nail polish for our students in school. For health and safety reasons, we cannot allow any acrylic/ false nails to be worn. Again, failure to meet the uniform policy will mean that students will work in isolation.

**Mobile phones** – We have also reflected upon our **Mobile Phone Policy** and will be tightening up on the use of mobile phones across school, which we know parents will support. Students will all be reminded of our policy, which notes that mobile phones and wireless earphones are not allowed to be used anywhere in school at any time (other than break and lunch in the diner or bistro). If students need to contact their parents (or vice versa) at any time during the school day, they need to contact reception, the Family Support or Pastoral Support teams. If phones or wireless earphones are seen at any point, they will be confiscated and taken to front reception. In the first instance they can be collected by students, but if it is confiscated again, parents will need to collect. Failure to hand over a phone will mean students will be sanctioned.

**Planners** – As well as a relaunch of the mobile phone policy, we will also be relaunching the use of our school planners. **Planners** are a key part of the equipment we expect students to attend school with every day. They are used to record the daily SSA grades that our students receive for their attitude to learning (A2L) in lessons, along with daily recording of homework. Along with a pen and any other equipment that students need for their lessons (e.g. PE kit), students will be unable to achieve an SSA grade 1 without having their planner present in each lesson and on their desk.

– Over the summer, we have spent considerable time refining our **Detention Policy** to ensure a swift response to any negative behaviour. We have also considered how we can use detentions as a sanction for students who are persistently late to lessons.

**Detentions for conduct and punctuality** – **SSA Detentions** will be set for students who fail to follow the Core Principles of our school in lessons. If a student receives a SSA4 or SSA5 they will be set a 20 minute detention, by their teacher. If a student receives an SSA\$ and is subsequently removed from their lesson, they will be set a 50 minute detention with a member of the Senior Leadership or Pastoral team. All detentions will be scheduled on the day a student receives the negative SSA grade, which will be communicated to parents/carers through the school app, Edulink One.

If a student doesn't attend an SSA Detention, this will then be escalated, and a new detention will be set. A missed SSA4 or SSA5 detention will be reset and then escalated to a SSA\$ detention, and a missed SSA\$ detention will result in the student spending a day internally isolated with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

**Late Detentions** will also be set for students who fail to be punctual for lessons. Any student who accumulates 10 or more minutes late between Period 1 to Period 4 will be set a lunchtime detention on the day they were late. Any student late to Period 5 will be kept after school. The detention duration

will be determined by the amount of minutes a student was late to lesson. Late Detentions that are unattended will also be reset and then escalated to a day internally isolated with a member of the Senior Leadership team.

If a student is unable to attend a detention, it's important this is communicated at the earliest opportunity to their class teacher or tutor.

We will also be reintroducing the **SLT isolation** and reflection room for the small minority of students who fail to follow the CORE Principles of the school on a consistent basis, or those who may be involved in a significant incident. Students working in this room will complete classwork and reflection work and be able to discuss each incident and the reason for their isolation with one of our most senior and experienced staff. Students will have a mid-morning and lunch break like all other students, but they will not access the main student community and will be delivered a lunch (sandwich or baguette and drink). Students will also be expected to stay in school until 4.00pm on the day of their internal isolation.

**Rewards** – all students who consistently follow our Core Principles are rewarded at the end of each term with reward assemblies, prize draws, and trips.

The Edulink One app is a key form of communication with parents/carers, so please do ensure you have downloaded this so we can work together to achieve the highest standards for our students. Please note that push notifications need to be activated for the app, and the app along with emails, should be checked each day.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who consistently work with and support us in our drive to raise standards and provide the best possible learning environment for all of our learners.

Yours sincerely,



Dave Sabri  
Deputy Headteacher