

# HOLBROOK ACADEMY



**Headteacher : Dr Simon Letman BA, MA, EdD**  
**Deputy Head : Nicola Shelley**

20<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Dear Parent/Carer,

I write towards the end of another very successful year for the Academy. Once again, in all areas, our talented students have made their mark and they can all feel very proud indeed of what they have achieved.

The year began in the best possible way with another set of outstanding GCSE results. The percentage of Year 11 students achieving at least a Grade 4 in both Maths and English (89%) ranked us as the top-performing state school in Suffolk.

Our success is reflected in the growth in size of the Academy. In September 2013, there were 409 students on the roll. This September, we expect 560. Our physical capacity is 590, which will be reached next year. In response to this, we have appointed a number of additional teachers in key subject areas in order to maintain our relatively low group sizes. For example, our new Year 7 intake of 120 students will be arranged in five forms and taught in five groups of no more than 24 students across all subjects.

Having re-launched a Student Council last year, the body has continued to go from strength to strength. The Council has recently produced a new Code of Rules which is now live across the Academy. Our new Senior Prefect team for next year has already been installed and we are confident that our new Head Boy, Caleb Ernst, and Head Girl, Maddie Holland, together with the other members of their talented team, will continue to work hard to develop a strong student voice.

One of the major highlights of this year was another incredibly professional staging of the musical 'Grease' in February. This was our fourth major production during my time at Holbrook. The show included students from across the whole age-range, working together as a team. We are already in the planning stages for next year's show. More information about this will be published next term. Funding for our productions is largely achieved through the generous support of the Alton Water Run trustees and we are enormously grateful for this. In addition, funds raised by students through the 'Summer Soiree' and Miss Shelley's 'Summer Spectacular' add to this, and I am grateful for your support of these productions.

Continuing with the theme of fundraising, our recent 'Secret Postcard Exhibition' was a tremendous success. Local artists, including our own students, were invited to send us a postcard-size work of art to be sold at an exhibition in support of our SEN department. Students prepared canapes, and well over a hundred visitors came along. Artists' names were not published next to their works, resulting in our own students' work selling at least as well as the 'big names'. To date, the art sale has raised over £2,400 towards equipment in the department.

As we have previously advised, the Academy uniform will remain largely unchanged for September 2018. However, shorts have now been added as uniform option for boys and girls in the hot weather. The shorts are available through our suppliers, Coes of Ipswich. Once again, I need to make a plea for your support for our efforts to ensure that all students comply with our uniform regulations. I have written to you on several occasions about the issues we are consistently and frustratingly having to deal with. These mainly involve length of girls' skirts, the wearing of leggings rather than trousers and wearing trainers. We will be adopting a 'zero tolerance' approach to breaches of the uniform code from September, including failure to comply with Academy rules on facial piercings, excessive makeup and dyed hair. Please refer to the new Code of Rules went out to you a few weeks ago about what is and what is not acceptable with regard to these areas.

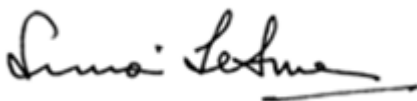
As also previously advised, we will be reverting to a horizontal tutoring model across all Year Groups in September and will be adopting a more progression-focused approach to our tutoring in Year 10. I will write to you again in September providing more detail on how this is going to work.

There are a number of staff changes for next year I would like to make you aware of. Mrs Law, our Head of Design and Technology, is retiring and we wish her well in the future. Joining us will be a new Head of DT, a new teacher of girls' games, a new English teacher and a new Cover Supervisor. I am delighted to report that we continue to attract very strong applicants at what is nationally a challenging time for schools.

In conclusion, as I hope you can see, we have all been very busy indeed this year as we continue to work hard on improving the experience of our students at the Academy. Once again, I would like to thank you all for your strong support.

We wish you all a good summer and we hope that your children will return to us in September reinvigorated and ready to face the many challenges of a new and exciting academic year!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Letman', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Dr Simon Letman