



THE PALMER CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Part of The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust

September 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

A warm welcome to the start of the new academic year. I thank you, as ever, for your full support in helping our students return to the academy in full academy uniform and ready to learn. Your continued attention to maintaining these standards will be invaluable as we help our young people in achieving our high expectations of behaviour, dress and learning.

I am proud to update you on the summer examinations. We are delighted with our results yet again with English, Maths and many of our subjects strengthening. We are, of course, very proud of our students and I congratulate our students, staff and families for the work that was done in partnership to achieve these results. They are as follows:

GCSE Results	2019	2018	2017
7+ / A**-A	32.4%	27.2%	19%
English and Maths 4+	81.5%	80%	79%
Maths 4+	84.7%	84%	84%
English 4+	87.8%	89%	85%

We achieved an incredible 88 grade 9s (A**), with Religious Education contributing 22 grade 9s.

Below are a number of outstanding departments which achieved 9-4 (A**-C) compared to national figures.

GCSE % Grade 9-4 (A**-C)	Academy	National
Maths	84.7%	59.6%
English Language	79.4%	62%
English Literature	84%	73.7%
Biology	95%	89.7%
Chemistry	94%	90.1%
Physics	93%	90.9%
RE	76%	72.4%
Computing	77%	62.7%
Music	100%	76.7%

We are pleased that our continued focus and drive on high expectations and aspirations alongside changes to our timetable and option choices have positively impacted on our students.

6th Form results

The measures put in place over the past few years continue to improve on our overall A level success. We are extremely proud of all of our students. Although we have experienced a dip in our top grades, we know that this is something that has been replicated nationally. Our students have progressed onto some of the top universities with 1 in 5 of our leavers studying in the fields of Medicine, Pharmacy and Biomedical sciences. 95% of our students have moved onto universities to continue their studies, we wish them every success.

<u>A Level Results</u>	2019	2018
A*- A	12%	13.2%
A*- B	29%	35.3%
A*- E	94%	91%

Academy Fund

We are ever striving to provide the best for our students. Each year, we rely on your generosity to support the academy in its developments. I am asking for a contribution of £60 per family. Your generosity allows so much to be achieved and adds significantly to the funds directly raised by the Governors. If you feel that you are in a position to contribute more, this would be very much appreciated. If your financial circumstances are such that you can afford less, then this will still be appreciated as all goes to the greater good of the students. Thank you for your support with the academy fund.

With these funds we have invested in modernising the academy with the following:

- New student toilets – Palmer House
- New student toilets – Mother Teresa House (Sixth Form Block)
- Refurbished student canteen
- Refurbished Library
- New ICT suite
- New Music production suite
- Refurbished assembly hall

This year we look to continue to provide the best facilities for our students including:

- New PE equipment
- ICT modernisation
- Refurbish Food Technology suite
- Curriculum expansion

Academy Website

Please visit our website at www.tpc.academy to keep up to date with our latest news as well as key information including policies, exam results and links for help and advice. Our Parent Support section has lots of useful information including our Caterlink menus, e-safety, term dates and much more.

Medical Protocols

Where there are a large number of children, from time to time some children become unwell. We have well-established practices and protocols to deal with such circumstances. However, children have, on an increasing number of occasions, caused considerable confusion by contacting their parents/carers by mobile phone, either before reporting to the medical room or whilst in the medical room. This proves to be unhelpful as parents/carers will often convey messages through their child to the welfare assistant and office staff. Accordingly, it is important that you remind your child that if he/she is ill they should report to the medical room but **not phone or text home using their mobile phone**. If need be the welfare assistant will do this.

Student attendance – unauthorised absence

As Headteacher, I believe that I apply a fair policy with regards to authorising a request for a child's leave of absence during term time. I gather as much information as I can and consider the facts. I do appreciate that the majority of parents/carers support this policy and do not abuse it. The regulations state that the Headteacher may, **in exceptional circumstances**, grant a Leave of Absence in term time. It is also for the Headteacher to determine whether or not an absence would be an exceptional circumstance, **not the parent or carer**.

I have been instructed by the Local Authority that fixed penalty notices of £120 per parent, per child (reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days) will apply in the following circumstances:

- Where a child does not regularly attend school
- Where an absence is unauthorised
- When a child is in a public place for the first five days of an exclusion.
- Absence due to family holidays/family celebrations.

I will continue to apply a fair policy where there is genuine need, which I consider to be an exceptional circumstance or a situation that requires special consideration. However, should the need arise I will also authorise the Local Authority to apply a fixed penalty notice.

Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are key to educational achievement. This term we will continue to rigorously enforce both our attendance and punctuality policies. Students must leave home in enough time to get to the academy.

We will accept exceptional circumstances but persistent lateness is unacceptable. Lateness has a profound effect on students' ability to settle quickly to their learning. Students will receive a 1 hour detention for lateness to the academy that is not supported by information provided from bus/train companies as the academy requests.

Appointments

During the course of the year, students may need to see a variety of medical professionals. As far as possible, we ask parents/carers to ensure these appointments take place outside of the academy day. However, where this is not possible, if your child has a medical appointment i.e. hospital, dentist or doctors, a note, together with a copy of the appointment letter, needs to be handed into Bede reception the day before the appointment.

If your child needs to leave the academy early for any other reason, this should be written in their planner and accompanied by a note.

Helpline

The Helpline is an email facility that allows parents/carers to contact me directly, in confidence. The helpline is as follows: helpline@tpc.academy

The helpline is not to be used for routine academy matters, which must be addressed through the normal and well-established procedures.

If you wish to email the academy for enquiries/routine matters please use: office@tpc.academy.

Behaviour in the community

Students are expected to abide by the Behaviour Policy both inside and outside of the academy and, on the whole, the majority of our students do. Please reinforce with your child the importance of positive behaviour and polite manners to all in the local community, giving extra consideration to those who are elderly or with young children.

Student Safety – going home from the academy

As you know I have senior staff at the gates, station and bus stop each evening. This helps ensure that the students disperse promptly and safely.

Please highlight the following with your child – regardless of age.

Students:

- Must take the first bus/train home at the end of the academy day
- Are not to frequent the local shops/food shops – they are to go straight home
- Must never accept a lift from a person not known to their parents/carers.

Should a student feel threatened in any way, he/she is to return immediately to the academy. There will be a receptionist on duty until 4.45pm in Bede Reception. The reality is that most staff and senior staff are in the academy until gone 5.00pm. However, there will be a nominated senior member of staff “on call” each evening. If students are seen in the local shops by a member of staff, a detention will be issued.

Free School Meal (FSM) Eligibility

If you are entitled to FSM, I have attached an information sheet that explains the entitlement to you. If you are entitled and are not registered, please do so as the funding will not only benefit your child but the academy as a whole.

Lost Property

If your child has misplaced any of their belongings, please ask them to check with lost property which is located in the Medical Room.

Open Evening

A reminder that we have a prospective parents’ evening on Thursday 26th September 2019 for any of you with children in Year 6 moving to Year 7 in September 2020. Details of the evening can be found on the website.

In addition to the above Open Evening, we will also be holding Open Mornings during the week commencing Monday 30th September where prospective parents are invited to visit the academy between 9.30am and 10.45am.

Please note that these visits are by appointment only. If you wish to make an appointment, please contact Mrs Bolton by telephone on 0208 590 3808 or via email at jbolton@tpc.academy. Please share this information with family and friends who are considering their secondary school choices soon.

Early Closure/Late Start

On **Thursday 26th September 2019** students will be dismissed at the earlier time of **2pm** to allow for the Open Evening.

The academy will start later the next day, **Friday 27th September, at 10.30am.**

Term Dates/Diary dates

The term dates for 2019–20 are on our academy website. I attach another hard copy for retention and reference. Diary dates for the autumn term are also available on the website.

I look forward to seeing you over the academic year.

Yours sincerely



Mr P Downey
Headteacher