

ALEC REED ACADEMY

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Acting Principal and CEO: Phil Cosby



20th October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

We have had a successful first half term and I am extremely pleased with how well staff and pupils have approached 'Operation Reset' and our return to pre-Covid routines. High levels of learning are taking place, across all age groups and the pupils are working hard to catch up on the learning that was lost during Covid-19. The academy has implemented a number of strategies to ensure that the gaps in learning are closed as quickly as possible. This has included focused small group support work, additional learning resources, increased staffing within key year groups and additional tutoring in the evening. For example, Year 11 now have an extended the school day to provide an additional hour of English, Maths and Science each week.

Research tells us that the most important strategy to close these gaps is improving literacy and this is central to our recovery plan. We must improve the reading ages of our children to ensure that they can confidently move on to achieve qualifications and live a happy and fulfilled life. With this in mind we have upgraded the Library with new books and reading resources and extended the opening times. It is now open from 8.00am in the morning to 4.00pm in the evening, providing a valuable resource for pupils to extend their learning and support with homework. I cannot emphasise how important it is that you encourage your child to read and that you provide them with access to books as frequently as possible. As parents we must be extremely cautious of providing access to online games too early or frequently during our child's learning journey.



With the start of the new term there has been a focus on improving the learning environment across the academy. The educational environment in which we teach is vitally important in setting standards and expectations. With this in mind we have recently enhanced the Year 2 playground by replacing the muddy area between the trees with artificial grass. Additional play equipment will also be fitted during the next half term. We are also in the process of upgrading the Nursery/Reception play space at the far end of the Arc. This half term has also seen the completion of the Gatehouse which will provide additional classroom space to support small group work.

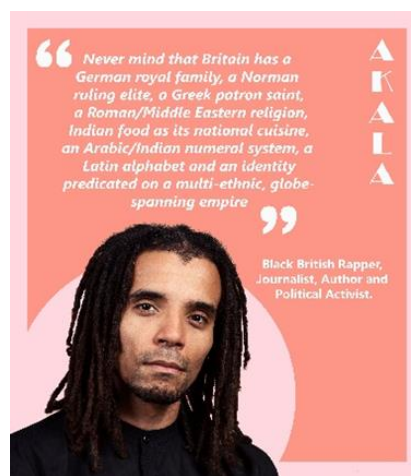
'The Collins PiXL Award for Outstanding Progress' National Award Winners 2014





Perhaps the most noticeable improvement are the new display hoardings on the Bengarth Road and Church Road gates. These make the entrance to the academy more welcoming and professional as well as celebrating all that the school has to offer.

Internally we have been focussing on enhancing corridor displays around the building by showing inspirational images and quotes from famous people. These posters have also been an integral part of our first 'drop-down' day in the secondary phase. The day provided an opportunity to discuss a number of topics that are key within the wider national curriculum and enabled pupils to develop their understanding and awareness of issues such as Equality & Diversity, Drugs, Sexual Health, E-Safety and Mental Health. Each topic and the way that it is delivered is age specific and underpinned, where appropriate by external experts, to make sure the learning that takes place is as impactful as possible. There will be further drop-down days later in the year.



Since the beginning of term I have been able to meet many of our parents at the open days that have been organised for key year groups transitioning to the next stage of their education. This year I have supplemented these with 'Meet the Principal' Coffee Mornings. This provides an opportunity for parents to visit the school and see it in action. These have proved very popular, and I have had to add additional dates to accommodate the number of parents that

have asked to attend. If you would like to avail yourself of this opportunity, then do please call to arrange a visit.

You will be aware that a key part of the government's strategy for recovery is the vaccination of pupils aged 12 – 15. We have now had confirmation that pupils in Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 will be offered the vaccination on Friday 22nd October (this week). Pupils in Year 7, Year 8, Year 12 and Year 13 will be offered the vaccination on Wednesday 3rd November. If you have a child in this age bracket you will, as with all vaccination programmes, receive information from the NHS regarding the process and specifically on the decision regarding consent. It is worth noting that the current number of confirmed cases nationally and within ARA is at its highest since last March. We must therefore continue to take appropriate measures – Hands, Face, Space, to prevent the spread of Covid-19. With

this in mind we will continue to expect secondary age pupils to wear face masks in communal areas inside the building.

Finally, I remind you that the Monday after half term is a Professional Development day for staff and that **the children all return to school on Tuesday 2nd November.**

I wish you all the best for the half term break.

Phil Cosby
Acting Principal & CEO