Bradley Stoke Community School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of the first full month back at school, I wanted to share some developments and updates with families. I hope this letter finds you well and that your child(ren) has settled well into the new academic year - we have been impressed with the mindset students have come back with and how well the overwhelming majority have responded to our expectations and, for many, their new learning and class groups.

Welcome back assemblies
Students have had a variety of assemblies in secondary phase focusing on expectations and opportunities available to them - in my opening assembly I spoke to them about the importance of community and what being part of BSCS means, both in terms of what we commit to as a staff body, as well as their responsibility as students wearing our uniform. This applies when outside as well as inside of school and we have been speaking to students about our expectations of them around this.

Flair – Race in the school community
We have been talking to students and staff about the importance of belonging - and you may remember that last summer, students in Year 6 and above completed a 'Race in the School Community' questionnaire run by an external company called 'Flair'. We have now had all of the responses in and are working as a leadership team to analyse and reflect on the whole school's views and experiences and build in improvements based on these findings.

Open Evening and Peer to Peer Support
Reception children now have their Year 6 'buddy' and the Year 11 Peer Mentors continue their support of our new Year 7s. Thank you to all students who supported last week's Open Evening for prospective students - we had a full house all evening and our student helpers were an absolute credit to the school. We had more students offering to help than we had spaces for, and so are looking for alternative events where we can ensure they have the opportunity to represent the school. Part of our Student Leadership offer is our Primary Council and learners have started to apply for these roles and it was wonderful to celebrate our Tutor Captains across last week's secondary phase assemblies where Mr Burnell introduced Year 8-11 captains to Year 7 and where our Inter-Tutor competition for the year was launched.

The Bradley Stoke Promise - Enrichment
One of the developments I mentioned in my Open Evening speech was the launch of our 'Bradley Stoke Promise' - which is a development of our already extensive Enrichment programme. This is a promise we are making to ensure students have the opportunity to get involved in a range of activities and experiences that we believe will equip them with the necessary skills to really flourish and succeed in the wider aspects of life - such as exploring the world of work; giving back to the community; taking a lead and representing the school. Mr Randall led assemblies this week launching the Promise to Years 7-11, and picked up a thread from my end of year assembly last July - the success of one of our ex-students, Lauren Kianchehr, who was part of the British Paralympic team in Paris this summer, working as the coach of boccia athlete Sally Kidson and coach of the mixed BC1/2 team. It was wonderful to hear Lauren's reflection in a recent message that she is only where she is now because of taking up the opportunity as part of BSCS' enrichment programme (she went with the school to the 2012 Paralympics) and that she still wears her BSCS jumper as a reminder of where it all began!

There have been numerous school trips already this year - Year 1 have been for a visit to the Willowbrook centre; Year 5 and 6 have both been out on camp and and a record number of Year 11s have been out on their Silver Duke of Edinburgh expedition camps before the weather turned. It was a pleasure to see so many Year 9 families attend the information evening of our DofE Bronze award and Miss Clayton is looking forward to launching this with those who've signed up. Our overview of enrichment activities including Enrichment Week will be circulated shortly to parents to help with planning for the year – but please note the first Enrichment Day in secondary phase is coming up soon on Wednesday 16th October.

PSHE – Smashed Live Event for Years 7 and 8
There is a lot of work being done to develop our PSHE programme for the year, and one of the events we were able to host earlier this term was a 'Smashed Live' event for Year 7 and 8, which began with a theatrical performance charting the lives of three teenagers and their experiences with alcohol. This was followed immediately by an interactive workshop exploring the social and emotional causes of underage drinking; its impact on young lives; social influence and decision-making and giving advice on where and how to help yourself and others. The external provider who delivered the event was really impressed by the students' behaviour and attitude across the morning and commented on how respectful they were - so well done Year 7 and 8!

School calendar and key dates
And finally, please do remember that our school calendar is available on the school website - which includes parent/carer evenings and key dates. We look forward to:

- **Primary Open Evening 1st October**
- **Year 7-11 'Meet the Tutor' evening 10th October** where we look forward to welcoming parents to our on-site event
- **Year 10 and 11 curriculum information evening 2nd October** (this is in addition to the Year 11 What and How to Revise evening that we introduced last year, which is in January and a new addition to the calendar).
- **Post 16 Open Evening 6th November**.
- **The Olympus Careers event**, open to all, **14th October** - please do see the website for more information and details for how to book a place - we're expecting a sell-out event!

Please note that **Term 1 finishes** mid-week next month, on **Wednesday 23rd October 2024**, with staff involved in training across the Thursday and Friday.

As always, please do get in touch if we can support in any way - the start of the academic year is so important for students to make a strong start and so well done to the amazing number of students who have 100% attendance so far and to all those who have been receiving Rs across the first few weeks of term - keep it up!

Kind regards,

Mrs Sophie Francis
Headteacher