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Elemore Hall School

Headteacher: Richard Royle

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Dear Parent/Carer

This is a letter in two parts – firstly a brief look back over the last year and secondly some information about the forthcoming year.

Last year

As the academic year ends and we all begin a well-earned break I would like to take this opportunity to look back on the last 12 months in school to remind everyone of what we have achieved.

There have been many individual successes and it would be impossible to list everything that has happened so I will apologise in advance if I have missed anything or anyone out. Concentrating on whole school aspects I have to mention the Christmas and Open Day performances. At Christmas we had our usual musical concert plus a very fine rendition of the musical play *Oliver!*. At Open Day we had an excellent concert that showcased the talent that many pupils have been developing over the year. A key element of all of these performances this year was the involvement of Y11 pupils who have really developed in their confidence and attitude throughout the year. This same group of Y11s displayed a high standard of commitment to their studies in the final months at Elemore and we are hoping that their efforts will result in good grades.

It was great to see a number of former pupils returning to help with technical aspects for the Christmas performances and also just to visit during the year and for events such as Open Day.

Charities have once more benefitted from the generosity of the Elemore community. In September we adopted Toilet Twinning as our main charity and we have so far raised money to support five toilets in disadvantaged parts of the world. Additionally, we continue to support other charity events such as the Macmillan Coffee Morning, Children in Need and Sports Relief.

In sport we have had some excellent performances both within school and in competition with other schools. It was great to see both our KS3 and KS4 boys winning the team trophies at the inter school athletics competition in early July – it was a mixture of ability and great attitude. Part of our success is in the way that our pupils support and encourage each other, it is fantastic to know that this is just our normal, everyday way of behaving, not something that we occasionally put on. Team work and encouragement can best be seen during our annual Sports Day. This is a hotly contested competition with all members of the school community being involved in some way. The five 'houses' compete in a number of athletic events, but it is a combination of winning and taking part that scores points for each team. This year Yellow House won a closely fought battle to claim the trophy but everyone had a great day.

Over the past year we have had regular visits from Vicky from the Anti-bullying group. She has worked with the whole school at different times over the year and more closely with a focus group looking at reducing and challenging bullying in school to make everyone's experience more positive. As part of the anti-bullying programme, pupils were interviewed about their views, this was all recorded by a former pupil who is currently studying for a

degree at Sunderland University. At the Open Day, we were presented with the BIG Award for our anti-bullying work, a great achievement.

Governance of the school is now strong. In September 2019 we recruited four new governors who have helped to improve the role and focus of the governing body. Ofsted were impressed by the work that governors do and by the fact that seven governors turned up for a meeting with the inspector- this is unusual. We still have vacancies for parent governors so if you think you might be able to support the school in this way please contact me for more information.

I can't finish a roundup of whole school events without mentioning Ofsted. In December we had our Annual Residential inspection where we were judged to be Good. In April we had our main education inspection. The last time that the school had this inspection in 2017 we were considered to be Requires Improvement, this time the inspector looked at all of the work we had done in the past two years and concluded that we are Good in every area. Not only was this a relief for the school, it also confirmed our own opinion that we provide a good service for the pupils and that pupils do achieve well with us. Achieving a Good grade is difficult for a school such as Elemore so I would like to say a big thankyou to everyone who has contributed to getting the school to where it is including pupils (past and present), parents/carers, visiting professionals and especially the staff. Our aim is now to work towards achieving an Outstanding grade in our next inspection.

Next year – Academic Year 2019-20

I am writing to you in advance of the 2019-20 academic year to give you some information and to remind you of a few expectations that we have.

We want your child to be as successful as possible in their education and to be able to fully benefit from their time at Elemore Hall School. Every lesson and experience that we provide contributes towards the overall success, progress and achievement that a pupil can enjoy at school. As always, we believe that you can support your child best by doing the following things:-

- Ensure that your child attends school regularly – aim for 100% if possible. If your child is going to be absent from school for any reason please let the school know.
- Encourage your child to do their best in lessons
- Ensure that your child always wears their uniform
- Make sure that your child has the correct clothing and equipment for PE
- Attend meetings for your child in school
- Ask your child about what they have been learning, take an interest in their education
- Encourage your child to read – this can be anything, books, magazines, newspapers
- Make sure that your child has a good nights sleep – remove/switch off electronic gadgets, games and phones at least an hour before bed time
- Ensure that your child has a suitable breakfast. Please avoid food and drink that is high in sugar. Energy drinks and chocolate bars are not suitable items for breakfast.
- If your child is prescribed medication, please make certain that they take it regularly. There are strict rules about pupils bringing medication into school and taking it whilst at school. Please follow the rules and guidelines and work with the school to ensure that your child is able to follow their medication regime as prescribed.
- We will occasionally set homework or bonus tasks for pupils to finish outside the classroom day – please support your child in completing these

MORE DETAILS

Uniform

At the start of term we will issue your child with two white polo shirts and two hoodies. As a school we give these items of clothing out at the start of every academic year and do not make a charge, however all pupils are expected to wear uniform every day (unless there is a special event such as Children in Need).

We understand that some pupils do not want to wear a uniform but it is an expectation of the school and as such should be followed. Pupils who wear the uniform will be eligible for rewards and will be able to take part in off-site visits and events. Pupil's who do not wear their uniform regularly will not be able to take part in offsite activities or trips.

It is such a simple and low cost uniform that there is no reason why pupils cannot wear it. If you want to purchase additional items this can be done through school at very reasonable prices, alternatively you can source the items from elsewhere but they must be plain without any visible logos.

Trousers – we do not have uniform trousers. Pupils should wear grey/black/navy blue trousers, track suit bottoms, jeans, etc.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that pupils have the uniform and that it is clean and appropriate. Resident pupils will be encouraged and shown how to launder their own clothes as part of independence education.

Footwear

Pupils should wear sensible shoes/trainers. They will need different training shoes for PE.

Coat

Whilst your child will spend much of their time indoors, there are occasions on the timetable and also breaks and lunchtimes where pupils may be outside, there are also occasional offsite visits as part of the curriculum. It is important that every pupil has a warm (preferably waterproof) jacket or coat.

PE lessons

For health & safety and hygiene reasons, pupils are expected to change clothing and footwear for PE lessons. Pupils are expected to bring their own PE kit into school to use, this should consist of:-

- Shorts/tracksuit trousers, t-shirt, sweatshirt,
- spare socks & underwear,
- training shoes with **non-marking soles** for use in the sports hall (different from those worn during the school day),
- outdoor training shoes for use on the yard or grass pitch,
- pupils may also bring football boots and training tops into appropriate lessons.

If a pupil does not have their own kit, they will be provided with spare clothing from school supplies and expected to wear it. On some occasions if pupils do not have appropriate kit, they may be required to do written PE work in place of a practical session. Repeated refusal or failure to change for PE may result in detention.

Every pupil has two timetabled PE lessons a week, however occasionally there may be additional lessons so it would be a good idea for them to bring kit into school on a Monday and take it home on a Friday for washing.

Lockers

There is a locker available for your child to use. All they need is a padlock to ensure that they can lock their possessions away safely. We recommend a combination padlock as then there is no key to lose.

Mobile phones

Mobile phones present the school with a huge problem as we are aware that many pupils feel strongly attached to their phones but lack the will-power or maturity to be able to manage their use appropriately. Due to the potential for misuse, pupils are not allowed to be in possession of a mobile phone during the school day. We would prefer pupils to leave their mobile phones at home, however if they do bring them to school they must be handed in on arrival, they will be returned at the end of the day.

There are occasions where parents/carers need to contact their child during school time or where a pupil wants to phone home – in these situations parents/carers should phone the school number and we will arrange for your child to take the call in a convenient location. Where pupils want to contact home during the day they should ask the Duty Coordinator who will arrange it. If a pupil is caught using their phone during the school day it may be confiscated until their parent/carer can collect it from school. If a pupil refuses to comply with his expectation they may be isolated in the school or excluded.

Some pupils have used their phones for taking photographs, videos or other recordings of other pupils, staff or events in school without consent, this could be a breach of Data Protection Law especially if the photograph or video is then posted on line or used in any way. Any pupil caught filming may have their phone confiscated until the images are erased, may be excluded or there may be Police involvement.

Smoking

We are aware that a number of pupils smoke cigarettes outside school and that they find it difficult to break the habit within school. As a school and county council site, smoking is not allowed on our premises and therefore staff need to speak with pupils who they see smoking to remind them of this rule. We are holding smoking cessation classes in school for pupils who want to give up however support from home would also be helpful. If you are aware that your child smokes, please can you encourage them not to, especially in school. Any pupil who continually flaunts this rule will be kept for a detention.

Vapes will be treated the same way as cigarettes.

Attendance

It is an expectation that pupils will aim to have 100% attendance at school, the government considers 'good' attendance to be over 95%. This means that any child should have a maximum of nine days absence for any reason per year. Absence includes illness, appointments, exclusions and term-time holidays.

We understand that there are occasionally circumstances where a pupil cannot attend however we ask that you try to make these occasions as few as possible. It greatly assists a pupil's ability to make progress and achieve if they have good attendance at school and in lessons.

Absence If your child is absent from school it is your responsibility as a parent/carer to contact the school to explain why, please remember to do this so that we can accurately record the reason for absence.

Term time holiday in line with government policy, term time holidays will only be approved in exceptional circumstances. A letter asking for approval should be sent to myself at the earliest opportunity. It should be noted that most requests for a holiday in term time will be refused.

Appointments wherever possible we would ask to make appointments such as medical or opticians outside of normal school time. If they do fall in school time we ask that you try to return your child to school as soon as possible.

Educational Psychologist and School Nurse

An educational psychologist and school nurse both visit the school for a morning per week for most weeks of the year. They offer drop in sessions for pupils who have concerns about some aspect of their lives or need a little advice or guidance. This forms part of the overall provision at the school and we hope that now we have it we can maintain it into the future.

Some of the key areas for the school nurse are linked to health promotion, including smoking cessation and diet, and sex education. The school nurse does not provide any of the services that you might already get from your GP or CAMHS.

Medication

Many of our pupils take regular prescribed medication. There are very strict guidelines regarding the transportation and administration of medication that the school must follow. In the new term school staff will be contacting all parents/carers of pupils who take medication to renew permission forms, to clarify what medication is being taken and to clarify how medication should be transported to school. It is essential that parents/carers work with the school to ensure that the rules and guidelines are followed correctly.

Occasionally pupils will have prescribed medication for a specific short term condition such as antibiotics. The school still needs to follow strict rules on this and parents/carers will need to provide the school with important information and permissions so that we can administer the medication appropriately.

Pupils sometimes need to have pain relief or other 'homely' remedies whilst at school, for example for headache or toothache. Parents/carers will be asked to complete a permission form agreeing that the school can administer such over the counter medicines when appropriate. School will always confirm by telephone before administering.

Year 11 - GCSE Examinations 2020

We do not have the exact dates yet, however the exams will be held between 11th May and 26th June – it is essential that your child has excellent attendance this year and particularly over the examination period. Some subjects such as Art, Photography, Resistant Materials and Food Technology have exams based on coursework and other subjects are coursework only such as Music, Horticulture and PE, these are ongoing throughout the year and reinforce the importance of your child attending every day and making the most of the educational opportunities on offer.

School website

The school website is constantly being updated, if you have not done so I would encourage you to take a look at it. The Blog section is regularly updated to show some of the things that have been happening in school. If you have any comments regarding the website or any additional information that we might include please let the school know. The website can be found at:- www.elemorehallschool.com

The school also has a Twitter page that is refreshed more frequently, our Twitter address is @ElemoreHall

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 4 th September	School re-opens to pupils following the summer holiday
Monday 21 st October	No residence all week
Monday 21 st October	Progress and Achievement Meetings for Years 10, 11 & M
Tuesday 22 nd October	Progress and Achievement Meetings for Years 7, 8 & 9
Wednesday 23 rd October	School closes at 3.45pm for half term holiday
Thursday 24 th October	school closed for staff training
Friday 25 th October	school closed for staff training
Monday 4 th November	School re-opens
Thursday 19 th December	Christmas Concert
Friday 20 th December	Break up for Christmas Holiday

The following are Provisional dates and may change depending on circumstances

Monday 6 th January	School re-opens
Monday 10 th February	Progress and Achievement Meetings for Years 10, 11 & M
Tuesday 11 th February	Progress and Achievement Meetings for Years 7, 8 & 9
Friday 14 th February	Break up for half term holiday
Monday 24 th February	School re-opens
Friday 3 rd April	Break up for Easter Holiday
Monday 20 th April	School re-opens
Friday 8 th May	School Closed for May Bank Holiday – VE Day
Monday 18 th May	Progress and Achievement Meetings for Years 10, 11 & M
Tuesday 19 st May	Progress and Achievement Meetings for Years 7, 8 & 9
Friday 22 nd May	Break up for half term holiday
Monday 1 st June	School re-opens
Friday 26 th June	Y11 officially leave
Thursday 16 th July	Open Day
Friday 17 th July	Break up for the Summer Holiday

As always, if you require any additional information and you cannot find it on the school website, please contact your child's Personal Tutor in the first instance and they will help or point you in the right direction.

Yours sincerely

Richard Royle
Headteacher