



NEWSLETTER UPDATE

Executive Principal



19th October 2021

Dear Stantonbury families

I am writing to update you on progress as we draw towards the end of this first half term. As you know we set out a number of priorities to address and I have set out the steps we have taken against each in this brief bulletin.

Safeguarding

The safeguarding and child protection policy has now been approved by the Academy Improvement Board (AIB) and is available for parents to view on the school website. The Policy outlines the key roles and responsibilities that are held by members of staff and the relationship that the school has with local safeguarding partners. We have also defined some of the specific safeguarding themes that are of high priority both locally and nationally and incorporated the key points from the latest version of the Department for Education's Keep Children Safe in Education document 2021 update.

We are a little further on with the first phase of the fencing programme and we hope that work will start on this later in the Autumn term although there are some issues with steel supplies that might delay this process slightly. The CCTV upgrade plan is now out for competitive tender and we shall know soon when work can start.

There has been excellent support from parents and community members for the changes we have made to accessing the car park at the end of school. Thank you - this has made the exit from school much safer.

Teaching and learning - Be Learning!

We continue to focus on establishing strong routines to lessons with the implementation of 'do now' activities. I mentioned this in my last progress report, and I am pleased that we are seeing these implemented consistently across the school. We are expecting to see a positive impact from this approach as we begin to assess some of the learning that has taken place so far. After half term I will outline the next phase of implementation that will help us develop even stronger lesson routines.

We have also welcomed members of the Tove Learning Trust school improvement team to support us with subject reviews in English and Maths and in refining our curriculum in Maths and Science. The feedback from these visits has been encouraging and I am confident that this intervention will continue to help us drive up standards of teaching and learning further. This comes at a good time as we lead up to these two faculties joining Art and Design Technology to occupy our brand-new teaching block that opens in January 2022.

Attendance - Be here!

As you will have seen in the media there has been mention of school attendance figures across the country being significantly below where they would normally be at this time of year. We are experiencing this at Stantonbury too, but I am pleased to say that we are just very slightly above the national average as of the end of last week. Although we have been very fortunate to have had only a few positive cases of Covid there have been lots of other viruses doing the rounds which has contributed significantly to our lower-than-expected attendance rates. The very same situation applies to staff absence too - it has been a very challenging half term in this regard.

We have put in place completely new attendance procedures to help keep children safe and to promote good attendance. There have been a few glitches with the new systems, but it is now working much more efficiently, and we are grateful for your support in informing us of absences and helping to encourage good attendance. We are also grateful to those families who have been on the wrong end of some of the glitches - we appreciate your understanding.

Communications

We hope that you will welcome the opportunity to complete the parent questionnaire that was sent out to parents last week. If you haven't had time to complete it, please do so by following this link <https://forms.gle/tphcd2Nwctvh5MWu6>

Gathering your views at this stage is important as we know that a significant number of parents have had concerns about the quality of education that Stantonbury School has provided in the past. This questionnaire will help us to establish a benchmark of your opinion at the start of the Tove Learning Trust journey and we hope that in subsequent surveys we will see increasing levels of confidence and positive feedback. I have been pleased to hear that a number of parents have already felt a difference, but it is important to recognise that changing an organisation of this size and complexity will take some time and that not everyone will feel the improvements at the same time. If we don't know how you feel about being a parent of the school, then it makes it difficult for us to improve - so please take a few moments to complete the survey.

We are also pleased to have been invited to join the Stantonbury parents Facebook groups. We hope that we can respond to some of the issues raised in the discussion in a timely way that parents will find useful.

Academy Improvement Board (AIB)

The first meeting of the AIB has taken place and I hope that parents will have seen the summary of the items that were discussed. We will do this on a regular basis throughout the life of the AIB. We expect that the AIB will help lead the improvements over the next 2 years so that we can be ready to establish a Local Governing Body (LGB), that includes elected parent representation, to help us move to greater success.

Be Ready!

As I reflect over the last 6 weeks, I am pleased in the way that we have got started on addressing the key priorities. Although there has been some good progress made in some areas, we need to remember that we have only just got started on our journey to make Stantonbury a great school. I have been so pleased to see how positive your children are in school and how they have adapted to different ways of working. There will be further changes after half term when we relax the bubbles that they have been working in. Students

will move to each of their lessons so they are taught in specialist areas and I am confident that these changes will really help lessons to run more smoothly and that students will take on the new responsibilities that they are expected to demonstrate with aplomb.

Thank you for your continued support of Stantonbury School.



Jim Parker

Executive Principal

