

Dear students and families

I'm writing this update letter reflecting on the release of our first externally assessed A level results, the enrolment of new students in August, a half term's worth of industrious activity and our biggest ever open evening.

So where do I begin?

Probably with the fantastic achievement of our 2022 leavers cohort – we don't throw terms around like 'the best in Bradford' lightly, but with 87% of A level students achieving grades A*-C (and 62% A*-B) and our BTEC students achieving 81% Distinction or Distinction Star grades it is hard not to. These amazing outcomes resulted in 4 students progressing to Oxford or Cambridge University and 14 students to medicine or dentistry – no small feat!

We celebrated the new Coach House teaching block being built which is now the home for our Psychology, PE and Geography departments. This additional capacity has allowed us to extend our cohort size to 1100 students.

The last half term has seen our UCAS early entry YR2 students send their applications in for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science (MDV) courses and Oxbridge. In addition to this all of our YR1 students have taken part in trips to Malham and York and it has been exciting to see the start of sporting fixtures and the take-off of music in our College.

All very impressive – but perhaps eclipsed by our annual culture and charity day where staff and students dressed to celebrate their culture and twirled down the lunchtime catwalk and raised £888 for Bereavement UK.

Let's be clear – all this excellent activity (and there's so much more I haven't space to write about) is underpinned by day in day out hard work. We are not casual about learning and lessons are the beating heart of our College. All the research shows being in lessons and concentrating hard is strongly associated with obtaining excellent grades. This leads me to attendance. Our students have an excellent record of attendance and punctuality as a cohort – but not all students are meeting the expectation we have for them. I strongly believe all students should be able to get to College by bus and arrive on time entering the building by 8:40am.

Parents – I know some of you are very kind and drive your young adult to the College – if they are unable to get in the car to allow you to get through the traffic and have them dropped off in the student drop off zone by 8:40am, my advice is to start sending them on the bus and letting them carry the responsibility for being on time themselves.

Looking to the next half term and the spring it is worth me explaining a point of detail – in 11-16 education and school sixth form settings when a student misses education due to overseas travel upon return to the UK they will go back into the same educational setting. That is not the case for D6A. We are what is called a post-16 institution – which means we receive funding from the Government to educate the students that attend the College. I don't authorise time off in term time except for in the most unusual and extreme circumstances – so any student that misses the



College due to being overseas during term time runs the risk of losing their place completely. Nelson Mandela said that education is a powerful weapon to change the world – what few people realise is that he said this, not in his country of South Africa, but speaking to students in Roxbury, Boston USA. The encouragement he gave was to explain that to become leaders, students need to successfully complete education – and try as much as possible, to stay in school. I want our students at D6A to become the next generation of leaders – this is not an easy affair and perfect attendance throughout this winter in lessons at D6A will be a significant step towards this goal.

Many thanks

Mark Rothery

*you can watch the whole thing here if you are interested in more context (the key bit is around 10 minutes in) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b66c6OkMZGw>

