



23rd October 2023

## Term 1 Newsletter

Dear GA Families

I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all your support and feedback this term. It has been an amazing start to the year and we are all incredibly proud to support your children as they climb the mountain to the very best universities and professions.

This term we have:

- **Visits from Local Sixth Forms and Colleges**

This unit we have been delighted to host a range of speakers from local sixth forms and colleges to enable our Year 11s to make informed choices and decisions as they consider what mountain they will climb next, once their GCSEs and time at Gloucester Academy ends. This unit we have been joined by St Peters, Gloucester College, Bridge Training, Ribston Hall, Cirencester College and Chosen Hill. After half-term we will continue with a range of speakers and drop ins available to support all of our Year 11s.

- **Hosted our Unit 1 Enrichment Fayre**

Our Unit 1 enrichment fayre showcased our diverse enrichment offer to pupils- with a record number of staff and student led enrichment sessions ranging from Homework club, Fashion, Anime, Art, Navigation, Football and much more.

- **Year 11's Completed Silver Duke of Edinburgh Expedition**

Despite the September weather and accompanying rain, we are delighted that our Silver Duke of Edinburgh had the opportunity to complete their expedition with a two night, three day expedition in the Cotswolds. We are proud of their independence, determination and teamwork as they faced chilly, dark evenings and long walking routes - always with a smile on their faces!

- **Year 10s Visited the University of Gloucestershire for a Geography Day**

This unit, thirty of our fantastic Year 10 Geographers had the opportunity to visit the University of Gloucestershire to take part in a Careers session with University Staff, GROWs and Kier Construction. During the day students saw the real life application of Geography to urban planning and learnt about new career paths.

- **Joined by the Community for our Open Evening**

During our September Open Evening we were delighted to be joined by a range of local community groups including the Redwell Centre, Community Builders, Read with Me, Young Minds Matter, The Nelson Trust, FairShares and many more local organisations we partner with to showcase our amazing partners and the fantastic work they do in school and out.

- **Reverse Mentoring with the Local Council**

Two Year 8 students this unit have had the opportunity to mentor a member of the Local Council, and act as a sounding board to new council initiatives. We are delighted that our pupils have been chosen to represent young people in Gloucester and be a voice for positive change, as well as grateful to the council for ensuring the voice of local young people is heard.

Mrs Phillipa Lewis, Headteacher

Gloucester Academy, Painswick Road, Gloucester, GL4 6RN

T: 01452 428800

E: [info@gloucesteracademy.co.uk](mailto:info@gloucesteracademy.co.uk)

W: [www.gloucesteracademy.co.uk](http://www.gloucesteracademy.co.uk)



- **Year 9 Young Enterprise Sessions**

Our Year 9 pupils have had the chance to take part in Young Enterprise workshops on building and curating a successful business. We were blown away by their business ideas, marketing strategies and advertising ideas. We cannot wait to see their future businesses thrive!

- **Year 8 Visits to Cheltenham Literature Festival**

This unit, 30 outstanding Year 8 English students were chosen to attend 'Gothic Great's' at the Cheltenham Literature Festival and attend a lecture on all things gothic, extending their knowledge of what they learn in class and further develop their passion for English.

- **Year 10 and Year 11 Visit to Macbeth**

We were delighted to take all of our Year 10 and Year 11 students to watch Macbeth at the Royal Shakespeare Company this unit. We hope this opportunity developed our students' understanding of their core English text, and we were delighted to see our students' maturity, enthusiasm and attitude to the trip - which even saw them get given a special shout out for excellence at the end!

- **Year 9 GCHQ Languages Session**

Our Year 9 linguists have had the opportunity to work with GCHQ linguists in this unit to understand the skills required to work within GCHQ and the application of languages in the real world.

- **Brilliant Club Commence for Year 9**

After gruelling applications, our Year 9 Brilliant Club has commenced with our Year 9 scholars receiving weekly university style tuition from a PhD tutor from the University of Bath on STEM. We are all looking forward to reading their final projects in due course.

- **Weekly drop in sessions with YMM**

Young Minds Matter have joined us on Thursday lunchtimes for a drop in session, accessible to all students since the beginning of term. This session is run in Mountain Rescue and all students are welcome. This is an informal platform for our students to access support for their mental health and wellbeing.

- **Musicworks Transition Programme**

A group of our year 7 students have been taking part in a transition workshop with musicworks; boosting self-esteem and wellbeing through creating music. We can't wait to hear the final product!

We have many more opportunities planned for our children next term including a Year 8 trip to take part in a cyber event in November. It is incredibly important that we ensure that our children at the academy get as much experience as they can when they are with us so that they are well informed and full of character when they pursue their next steps.

One last area I would like to share with you is the feedback we have been getting from all year groups over hot chocolate this term. As Headteacher I have had the pleasure of meeting a lot of your children to talk through what they like about the school and suggestions they have made for improvements. This term we mainly focussed on feedback from the girls - rest assured I will be meeting the boys over the next two weeks and will update you on what they say.

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## Year 7

I met with **Lenayah, Lily- May, Sophie, Poppy, Ruby, Mollie, Sienna, Amy and Mursal** and they explained to me that they liked:

- How easy it is to get around the school now
- The beautiful grounds and there is a lot of greenery
- That everyone is organised and ready to learn, there is no disruption
- There is a chance to make lots of new friends
- There are lots of teachers around, always someone to talk to
- The fact that the teachers are really positive and welcoming.

They would like to suggest the following:

- More gym equipment in the play area
- We love the dog but can we have more animals?
- Litter picking duty for those who want to
- More places to sit at lunch as people put their bags on the table and leave it there
- A way to always talk to someone when you may be feeling sad

From their comments and suggestions, I have:

- Explained that we are getting a new play area built this year so there is more room to run around. I can look at putting some more play equipment there too - a great idea
- We are looking at a pet for mountain rescue at the moment but have not decided what would be best
- We have litter pickers so we can definitely get them out at lunch and break for those extra reward points
- I have told the duty staff to watch out for that and move bags under the table if they are left
- We will be publishing a timetable so students know where people are at lunch and break

## Year 8

I met with **Lily- Rose, Sara, Lilly, Nataj'ai, Alma, Naomi and Stevie** and they explained to me that they liked:

- The rewards programme and trips
- The large classrooms
- The teachers are really welcoming and friendly
- The food at lunch time
- The music lessons and enrichment clubs

They would like to suggest the following:

- More music lessons in the timetable and a chance to take an instrument home
- More time to get to class
- More plants in the schools as the school is a bit white!

From their comments and suggestions, I have:

- Not been able to put more music lessons in this year but we are looking to expand the department. We do have a choir on a Monday and we are sending out letters to invite all to take part in music lessons if they would like to learn an instrument.
- The school day is set up so you have time to get to lessons if you have to travel from one side of the school to the other - normally you don't have to do that so you should have time to get to lessons. We will look at it again as the school gets larger
- Totally agreed with this - it is one of my missions to get more plants in the school - you may have noticed that some teachers have done this already.

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## Year 9

I met with **Leyla, Selina, Mya, Darcy, Chloe and Tiano** and they explained to me that they liked:

- The fact that they had so many subjects - DT, Drama, Food etc
- The teachers are really helpful and I really like the lessons
- The new turn and talk that means we can practise our answers with someone else before giving them
- Using more instruments in Music
- The routines in each classroom mean that everyone knows what to do when

They would like to suggest the following:

- Have their phones out at lunch and break
- Build a roof on the bike shed so the bikes do not get wet
- Suggest reading books for the tutor time
- Change Duke of Edinburgh nights as you cannot do the production and the DofE award

From their comments and suggestions, I have:

- I have explained that not having phones at break and lunch means that students spend more time together and cuts down on any antisocial behaviour that may happen. Having phones like this is not safe for everyone
- I have ordered a roof for the bike shed
- This is a good idea - but difficult at the moment as we have to buy 35 copies of every book - we will see what we can do
- I will speak to the DofE crew and see if they can change their evening.

## Year 10

I met with **Nathalia, Louie, Lily, Takondwa, Nathaniel and Liam** and they explained to me that they liked:

- The uniform especially the shorts
- The teachers are good and really care about their students
- Enjoy the lessons

They would like to suggest the following:

- There should be more variation in what they read in the morning
- There should be a school bus to pick them up in the morning
- Some teachers are not giving out the Golden tickets - and we would like a crown for exceptional performance

From their comments and suggestions, I have:

- This is a good point - we will have a look at the mixture of books for Year 10 and make sure they have varying themes
- We don't have a school bus at the moment but we have two new mini buses on order that we may be able to use in the future
- I will make sure I remind staff to give out the Golden ticket - I love the crown idea!!

## Year 11

I met with Year 11 Ambassadors and Deputy Ambassadors, **Artiqah, Juveriya, Oumou, Erica, Smith and Emma** and they explained to me that they liked:

- Turn and talk in lessons is great fun and gives us a chance to discuss answers
- Student shout outs in assembly
- Period 7, Elite Training is a good place to get homework done and ask for help
- Loving our new Head of English, she is a brilliant teacher.

They would like to suggest the following:

- More time for Sport

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- The leadership team should have more time together to discuss next steps, they should also have their own ties
- We should be able to have shout outs for teachers
- More exam questions to revise from

From their comments and suggestions, I have:

- Explained that we will be offering sport in Elite training on Fridays
- We will be greeting the leadership team together every other Thursday and make a plan across the year
- We will get some ties for the leadership team
- We will see how we can get shoutouts for teachers - we will need suggestion boxes in zones this is something the character reps can do
- We will pass on the message and ensure we have enough exam questions available.

I hope you enjoyed finding out all about our first term at Gloucester Academy, I have certainly enjoyed reflecting on our achievements. If you have any feedback about what you would like to read in this newsletter please send it to Mrs Gasher [Cgasher@gloucesteracademy.co.uk](mailto:Cgasher@gloucesteracademy.co.uk)

We encourage everyone to come and visit the Academy. Remember 'Every day is an open day' at Gloucester Academy, please visit our website and book a 'school in action tour'. Come and see one of the most improved schools in the country, we will take great pride in showing you around.

Have a great half term break with your families. We will see you all on Monday 6th November 2023.

We will of course see Year 11 during the following week as they attend October school.

Mrs P Lewis  
Headteacher

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