



## Penistone Grammar School Advanced Learning Centre Never Stop Flying

**Principal: Mr Paul Crook**

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Achieving Excellence through a Values Driven Education



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Dear Parents and Carers

The main purpose of my letter to you today is to provide you with an update on our Values Driven Expectations system. However; before I do I would like to update you about the present position in terms of securing fair funding for our students.

You will recall receiving a letter from our Chair of Governors, Mr Eugene Gallagher, at the end of September. Mr Gallagher outlined the fantastic news that Penistone Grammar School ALC was set to be one of the biggest percentage gainers under the Government's National Funding proposals (NFF), but that this would be subject to how the Local Authority decided to distribute the funding across all Barnsley schools for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years.

I can confirm that the Local Authority have now outlined the indicative amounts all schools will receive. The initial information shared demonstrates a commitment by the LA to move towards the notional figures put forward by the Department for Education. This is particularly important for our school given the legacy and scale of underfunding we have experienced for many years.

The Local Authority are in the process of consulting with schools and their governing bodies regarding the proposals, with the deadline for submission of responses being 30 November 2017. Once we have received confirmation of the outcome of the consultation I will update you further in terms of next steps. I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank all those parents who supported our campaign at the beginning of this year.

Focusing now on Values Driven Expectations; as you are aware, we launched our new rewards-led approach in September. The aim was to introduce a clear system which would encourage improvements in behaviour generally and specifically in relation to low level disruption in lessons.

At the end of the first half-term we spent time collecting the views of our students, staff and parents to ensure that our 'Values Driven' approach was meeting the original brief which had been set down. I would like to thank those parents who attended our Parents' Meetings or took time to share their experience of the system over the first weeks of implementation. Based upon the feedback we have received, I can confirm that we will be making some changes to the system and I have detailed these below for you:

### **Access to Rewards' Events**

Many parents and students have asked for clarification about how students can gain access to Rewards Events. I can confirm that, to access events this academic year, students will need a positive point total. This will be calculated using a 5:1 merit to line ratio. As an example, this means that a student who has lost 5 lines over the course of the first term will need at least 25 merits to access the Christmas Reward Event.

Our first Reward Event will take place on the final day of this term, Friday 22 December. Your son/daughter will be bringing home a letter with further information regarding this over the course of the next few days.

## **'Behaviour' lines**

We accept that the Behaviour category is broad and incorporates many different types of behaviours. We also accept that this can be more subjective than other categories, for example 'Uniform' or 'Home Learning'. We will therefore be making two changes to this for this academic year:

- The cumulative total for behaviour will be reset to zero at the beginning of each term for every student.
- The threshold for a fixed term exclusion for 'behaviour' will be increased from 15 lines to 20 lines.

The spirit of the Values Driven Expectations system is to support students to change their behaviours, so they can succeed, not only in their learning, but in life beyond school. We will therefore be ensuring the explanations given for any lines lost provide enough detail for you to be able to enter discussion with your child at home, and that our students understand why they have lost the line and what they need to do differently moving forwards.

## **Contact details for questions, comments or concerns about the 'Values Driven' system**

At both Parent Meetings you have asked for details of how you should contact us if you have questions, comments or concerns about our Values Driven Expectations system. I can confirm that the best way to get in touch is via email to our main address: [enquiries@penistone-gs.uk](mailto:enquiries@penistone-gs.uk). It would be helpful if you could mark the subject of your email 'Values Driven Expectations' and our Reception Team will forward this to the most appropriate person to respond. Please note, emails are monitored between 08:00 and 16:00 Monday to Friday and we guarantee to respond within 2 school days (although we will always aim to get back to you in a shorter period where we can). If your enquiry is urgent, you can also contact us via telephone on the main school number (01226 762114), selecting Option 2 for our Inclusion Team.

## **Supporting the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of our Students**

To respond to the concerns some parents have expressed about the impact of the new system on the mental and emotional wellbeing of our students, it is my intention to commission an independent assessment in this regard. I am committed to doing all I can to support the mental and emotional wellbeing of our students; this is very important to me personally and an absolute priority. The review therefore, will not only focus on the impact of the VDE system, but also on the general wellbeing of our students. I aim to commission the review as soon as possible and am currently investigating the best options for this. I will write to you again to confirm the details as soon as they are available but intend for this to be arranged prior to Christmas so we can put any actions that may be identified within the assessment in place at the earliest opportunity.

## **Reasonable Adjustments for those students with Special Educational Needs or Disability**

We are aware that some members of our learning community require support to succeed within the system due to additional needs or disabilities. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments and identifying exactly what the support for each individual looks like. Our SEND Team, led by Mrs Lynn Smith, our Special Educational Needs Coordinator, will be working with parents of SEND students over the coming weeks to put individual plans in place where needed. There will be a meeting for parents which will provide further details about this on **Wednesday 6 December 2017 from 16:30 to 18:00** (further details below).

Finally, I would again like to thank those parents who took the time to attend our 'Values Driven' focused meetings. Your feedback is important to me; I believe we can only achieve the best for our young people if we are committed to working collaboratively. To this end it is my intention to increase the opportunities parents have to engage with the school. I have detailed our schedule for parent meetings for this academic year below, please use the "Register Now" links to sign up to attend:

Title:	<b>SUPPORTING SEND STUDENTS WITHIN THE VDE SYSTEM</b>
Date:	Wednesday 6 December 2017
Time:	16:30 to 18:00
Description:	Presentation by Mrs Lynn Smith (SENCo) outlining how the school supports those students who have additional needs to succeed within the Values Driven Education system. This will be followed by an open Q&A and discussion session. (Please note, this session is specifically for parents of students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities).
Register here:	<a href="https://supporting_send_students_within_the_vde_system.eventbrite.co.uk">https://supporting_send_students_within_the_vde_system.eventbrite.co.uk</a>



**Title:** PROPOSED CHANGES TO CURRICULUM FROM SEPTEMBER 2018  
**Date:** Tuesday 9 January 2018  
**Time:** 18:00 to 19:30  
**Description:** Opportunity for parents to hear about the changes the school intends to make to its curriculum and school day structure from September 2018. This will be followed by a curriculum Q&A session and an opportunity for parents to share their thoughts on the proposals. (Please note, any changes to the school day will not affect start or end times; ie 08:20 to 14:50).  
**Register here:** [https://proposed\\_changes\\_to\\_curriculum\\_from\\_sept\\_2018.eventbrite.co.uk](https://proposed_changes_to_curriculum_from_sept_2018.eventbrite.co.uk)

**Title:** VDE REVIEW OF AUTUMN TERM  
**Date:** Thursday 18 January 2018  
**Time:** 18:00 to 19:30  
**Description:** The aim of the session is to provide a further opportunity for parents to share their experience of the system after the Autumn term with a particular focus on the impact of the changes detailed above.  
**Register here:** [https://vde\\_review\\_of\\_autumn\\_term.eventbrite.co.uk](https://vde_review_of_autumn_term.eventbrite.co.uk)

**Title:** REVIEW OF PARENT SURVEY 2017 AND ACTIONS AS A RESULT  
**Date:** Wednesday 31 January 2018  
**Time:** 18:00 to 19:30  
**Description:** Presentation outlining the main findings of the 2017 Annual Parent Survey and the actions the school intends to put in place as a result. This will be followed by a Q&A and feedback session.  
**Register here:** [https://review\\_of\\_parent\\_survey\\_2017.eventbrite.co.uk](https://review_of_parent_survey_2017.eventbrite.co.uk)

**Title:** FROG FOR PARENTS: HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM OUR VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT  
**Date:** Thursday 22 February 2018  
**Time:** 18:00 to 19:30  
**Description:** Presentation by Mr Michael O'Brien, our Strategic Leader for ICT and Mrs Diane Prince, our VLE Developer, outlining how you and your child can get the most from Frog. This will be followed by a Frog Q&A session and an opportunity for parents to share their views about how they would like to see Frog develop moving forwards.  
**Register here:** [https://frog\\_for\\_parents.eventbrite.co.uk](https://frog_for_parents.eventbrite.co.uk)

**Title:** HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD WITH LEARNING AT HOME  
**Date:** Monday 19 March 2018  
**Time:** 18:00 to 19:30  
**Description:** Helpful tips and hints from Mr Ian Richards aimed at helping you to support your children with learning at home followed by a Q&A session.  
**Register here:** [https://how\\_to\\_support\\_your\\_child\\_with\\_learning\\_at\\_home.eventbrite.co.uk](https://how_to_support_your_child_with_learning_at_home.eventbrite.co.uk)

**Title:** TUTOR TIME, HOUSE SYSTEM AND REWARDS  
**Date:** Tuesday 24 April 2018  
**Time:** 18:00 to 19:30  
**Description:** Opportunity for parents to understand more about the aims and objectives of Tutor Time, the House system and how this links into rewards. This will be followed by a Q&A and discussion session.  
**Register here:** [https://tutor\\_time\\_house\\_system\\_and\\_rewards.eventbrite.co.uk](https://tutor_time_house_system_and_rewards.eventbrite.co.uk)

**Title:** PRINCIPAL'S OPEN FORUM  
**Date:** Wednesday 23 May 2018  
**Time:** 18:00 to 19:30  
**Description:** Open Forum with the Principal; an opportunity for parents to come along and ask questions or discuss any aspect of our learning community.  
**Register here:** [https://principals\\_open\\_forum.eventbrite.co.uk](https://principals_open_forum.eventbrite.co.uk)



I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the course of the coming months and thank you for your ongoing support of your children, and of Penistone Grammar School ALC.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Crook". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Paul Crook  
**Principal**

