

# gilesacademy

25 May 2017

Dear Parent/guardian,

I wanted to use this opportunity to provide an update on various aspects of the school this term and of some of the changes which are coming.

On 25 May 2017 the entire Giles community, students and staff, stopped to observe the national minute's silence as a mark of our respect for those affected by the terrible Manchester Arena attack of 22 May. Given that this attack was targeted at young people we felt that it was particularly important to take some time to quietly remember the victims and their families, friends and loved ones. We also made the decision to make the last day of term, 26 May, a non-uniform day with students donating £1 each to the British Red Cross appeal for the Manchester Arena Attack.

You may have heard from your sons or daughters that we have recently moved to "no bells" across the school day. The bells which punctuated the day at the school, marking the start/end of lessons and lunchtimes/breaks have now been removed. In their place we now only use bells four times a day to give warning that sessions will start in 5 minutes and one bell to mark the end of the school day. The response from students and staff has been overwhelmingly positive. They say that they feel that this has helped to create a calmer atmosphere around the school and give increased responsibility to students to manage their own time.

As you will already be aware, the school uniform will be changing from September 2017. The new uniform will be compulsory for new Year 7 and Year 12 students and will be phased in for all other years. Current Y7 to Y10 and Y12 students will be able to continue to wear the existing uniform. Please be aware, however, that once the existing uniform items are sold, especially in the popular sizes, we will not be ordering any more. Therefore, once the existing uniform items are out of stock, it will be necessary to purchase new uniform items. Jackets and PE kit items of the current uniform are presently being offered at half the original price. I wrote to you in February about these changes and outlined some of our reasons for this change in uniform. I would add to the reasons that I gave there that we wish to have a school uniform which is the same for all students and allows them to show their pride in attending the Giles Academy. The outgoing uniform provides a degree of freedom with regard to choice of trousers and skirts which has led to some students wearing items which are not appropriate for a school environment (eg skirts which are too short or trousers which are far too tight). The new uniform will provide far greater clarity in what is acceptable. I would also add that we are continuing to work very closely with Nationwide Uniform to provide various discounts when buying "bundles" of items. More details will follow on this next term and in the coming year.

In the past the last day of term has included an activity afternoon or an afternoon "event". This year we are amending this slightly. On 19 July we will have lessons as normal for period 1 to 3. From period 4 onward we will have a whole school event to mark the end of the school year and school will then close early at 1:30pm. All of the bus companies are aware of this change and transport home will not be affected.

Thank you for your continued support,

Yours faithfully,



Ian Widdows  
Headteacher

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